TWO SERIAL STORIES, PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED.

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON (OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

No. 346. FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 17TH, 1895. [ONE PENNY.

A GEOGRAPHICAL VIEW OF A GLOBE-ULAR ANTIDOTE.

BEECHAM'S PILLS always BRIGHTON you up like a summer's BATH.
BEECHAM'S PILLS will lift you from the SLOUGH of despondency
BEECHAM'S PILLS make a bright EYE and a BLYTHE step.
BEECHAM'S PILLS will make you WARE like an IRON BRIDGE.
BEECHAM'S PILLS are good travelling companions wherever you may ROME.
BEECHAM'S PILLS bring a NICE complexion; take one during your IDLE moments.
BEECHAM'S PILLS should accompany FLORENCE and VICTORIA on their summer TOURS.
BEECHAM'S PILLS are known from TASMANIA to SPITZBERGEN.
BEECHAM'S PILLS have been over ANDOVER again admitted to be worth a NEW GUINEA a box.
BEECHAM'S PILLS should accompany every ship's CREWE, in case illness "springs a LEEK" on them.
BEECHAM'S PILLS will make your constitution as hard as FLINT or STONE.
BEECHAM'S PILLS find a NEW-MARKET and a NEW-PORT daily; their SALE is immense.
BEECHAM'S PILLS are decidedly calculated to bring a DEAL of benefit to you.
BEECHAM'S PILLS are grand nerve reposers when you cannot SETTLE.
BEECHAM'S PILLS are likely to exist as long as STONEHENGE.
BEECHAM'S PILLS have no BOURN, no limit, as to their effectiveness.
BEECHAM'S PILLS have invariably the power to take all the MOLD off you.
BEECHAM'S PILLS will make your spirits light as AYR and buoyant as a CORK.
BEECHAM'S PILLS will quickly take all the WALES and cries out of SYDNEY and ADELAIDE.
BEECHAM'S PILLS annual Sale of Six Million Boxes yearly surely LEEDS the way.
BEECHAM'S PILLS when you have ETON too free, or imbibed too DIEPPE, will right you at once.
BEECHAM'S PILLS truthfully MALAY claim to saving thousands of lives yearly.
BEECHAM'S PILLS are the best present for SUEZ handsome BOW when he is indisposed.
BEECHAM'S PILLS preserve you from the MENAI STRAITS a neglected system is subject to.
BEECHAM'S PILLS glide DOWN as pleasantly as a LONDON oyster.
BEECHAM'S PILLS never fail to cool the system when you BERNE with HITCHIN sensations.
BEECHAM'S PILLS will suit either MISSIS-SIPPI or MISS-OURI at home or travelling.
BEECHAM'S PILLS are pacific in their action; once tried you never TYRE of them.
BEECHAM'S PILLS will benefit either an ASIA MINOR or an adult AMAZON.
BEECHAM'S PILLS have the power of bringing you to a NEW-HAVEN of health.

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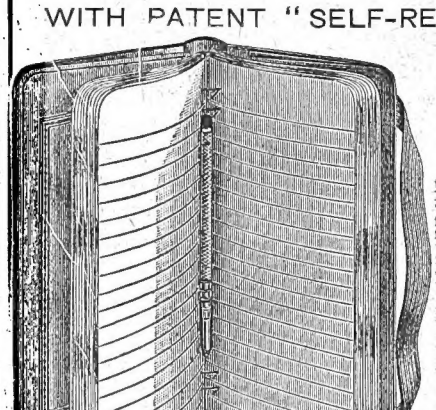

THE HANDIEST AND THE BEST. THE SIMPLEST AND THE CHEAPEST.

As will be seen from the Illustration, this Note-Book has a hollow "rest" cut into the back, into which the Pencil falls and is securely held, while by means of an ingenious contrivance called a "Self-Register," the person using the Book can at once open it where he was last writing. A reference to any page in the front, the middle, or the end is also materially assisted by the "Self-Register."

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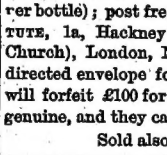

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SHORT STORIES

No. 346.] [One Penny.

Edited by

C. Arthur Pearson.

For the Week ending August 17th, 1895.

Without Precedent.

"Things can't go on any longer as they have done," was Ralph Eggleston's remark to himself, as, after a more than usually unsatisfactory *tête-à-tête* with his *fiancée*, Miss Marsh, he at length took his departure, resolving as he left the house that he would never visit it again.

The fact of the matter was Miss Marsh was an heiress in her own right, and realising her social importance, was somewhat exacting in her demands upon her lover, who, it is but fair to say, was no mere fortune-hunter, being a rising young barrister and possessed of a fair income of his own, so that his motives could not be regarded as purely mercenary.

They had met originally—he and Miss Marsh—at the house of a mutual acquaintance; had taken to each other, as the saying is, and in course of time the liking had extended into courtship, and when Ralph had proposed marriage the answer was a favourable one.

For a time after the engagement had been announced, all went pleasantly enough; but of late there had been more or less frequent bickerings between them, not the sort of lovers' quarrels which often tend to unite two young people more to each other in the end, but an amount of exaction on the lady's part against which the independent spirit of her lover rebelled.

At length things seemed to have arrived at a climax, as evidenced by the remark at the commencement of this story.

Having relieved himself by its deliverance, Ralph strode moodily along in the direction of his own home, when an inspiration suddenly seemed to occur to him, as he said aloud:

"And why not? A capital idea! I will give it a trial, anyway. To meet a woman who would really care for one would be to have new interest in life. There must be hundreds of girls in this city who would be only too glad to go in for a little innocent flirtation; it need not go any further than that. Anyway, I'll give the thing a chance," and stepping into the office of a daily paper, he quickly wrote out an advertisement for the matrimonial column, paid for its insertion, and set out for home again, feeling well satisfied with himself at having done a satisfactory thing.

"It will be a delightful change," was his mental comment; "that is, if I get any replies, and there should happen to be one amongst them from a really nice girl."

On Monday morning he called at the office and presented his ticket, in case there were any answers to his advertisement.

Any answers, indeed! Why, there were a shoal of them, and it took him several hours to master their contents. There were letters from ladies in all ranks of the social scale.

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Some of them he threw aside contemptuously, after reading the first few lines, others he reserved for further consideration, finally deciding to reply to one signed Rose Attwood, the wording and tenor of which most appealed to him.

In due course he received an answer, whereupon he wrote, suggesting an appointment for an early date, naming as a rendezvous a spot where he did not anticipate he was likely to meet anybody he knew.

Punctual to time he put in an appearance there, only to find the lady awaiting him; to his astonishment, and no less agreeable surprise, she was a young girl of decidedly prepossessing appearance and ladylike demeanour.

"You got my letter," he stammered out; "I am R. E." He had given his initials only.

"Yes," she replied, with a becoming blush, "otherwise I should not have been here."

"Well, we can't stand talking here very well, what do you say if we go and have some lunch; I know a capital place not far off."

"Thank you very much," and they went.

The strange acquaintanceship thus formed rapidly blossomed into friendliness. Although always neatly and nicely dressed, Ralph soon discovered that Miss Attwood was by no means well off, and that to be taken about to theatres and other places of amusement, not omitting cosy little dinners before, or suppers afterwards, were delights to which she had never before been accustomed; and in this way the weeks sped into months without either being apparently aware of the flight of time.

An exacting lover.

Ralph had gathered that she supported herself as a music teacher, having left her home in the country to reside with friends in town, and from a casual remark she had made one day he had an idea she was, or had been, married, but whether she had a husband living or not never bothered him; he found her companionship an agreeable change to that of his *fiancée*, and that was enough for him.

She, on her part, had never sought to pry into his affairs in any way except what he told her about himself. She listened to him with interest, and what he did not care to tell her she evinced no anxiety to know.

On this convenient basis their friendship existed. They were, in fact, very good friends indeed, and as nobody but their two selves knew of their intimacy, there was no "Mrs. Grundy" to point out that they were living in a fools' paradise which could not very well exist for ever.

Strange as it may appear, Ralph had not broken off his engagement with Miss Marsh, and despite his resolution never to go to her house again, he nevertheless called there from time to time, although his demeanour had not much of the ardent lover about it. Not that this was likely to give his *fiancée* any great amount of uneasiness, seeing that she was not very much in love with him. They were going to be married some day, she supposed, and that was enough for her.

One evening when dining alone with Rose, an occurrence which came regularly two or three times a week, Ralph casually alluded to his engagement.

The colour left his companion's face as she replied:

"And are you really engaged to the lady you spoke of?"

"Well, I suppose so. She has never broken it off."

"And you will marry her some day?"

"Oh, I don't know. I might do worse. She is very rich, and I—well, I'm a poor man, comparatively speaking, you know. I have to work hard at my profession, and one doesn't want to slave away all one's life."

"No."

"Don't think for a moment I am nothing but a fortune-hunter. I really did like the girl once, but she's so hard to please."

"Do you try to please her?"

"Yes, honestly I do. For a long time I did everything I could think of to meet her wishes."

"And you failed to succeed?"

"That's so. She is so difficult to satisfy. Sometimes it's one thing, sometimes another—from politics to preaching."

"Is she what you call very goody-goody?"

"My dear girl, she's anything but that."

"Oh!" followed by a pause of some moments, during which Rose toyed idly with a spoon in front of her.

"What are you thinking about, my pet?"

"You," was the simple rejoinder.

"And what about me, little woman? And why so serious over it?"

"You will be marrying soon, I suppose, and—do you know I would like to go home now, please."

"Nonsense, child, why you are going to the theatre. You have forgotten."

"No, I have not forgotten, but after what you have told me, I would rather not go, thanks. Would you mind walking with me as far as our corner as you call it?"

It should be explained that in their various outings, the final farewell had invariably been spoken at the corner of a certain street where they always parted, Rose, on leaving, running along swiftly until she came to the steps of one of the flat houses, all exactly alike, that loomed solemnly in a row, then having turned round and waved her hand, she disappeared indoors.

She had told Ralph on the occasion of his first escorting her to the corner, that she wished her exact residence to remain unknown to him, and he was enough of a gentleman, having given his word, not to attempt to discover it.

"Good-bye, and thank you very much for all the kindness you have showered upon me, for which I am deeply grateful; but," with a choking sob, "I would rather not see you again, please;" and darting off, she had reached the house and run up the steps without so much as looking back, almost before Ralph had realised what her last words meant to him, or how fond he had become of her.

After standing motionless for a few moments he appeared to have come to some sudden resolution, and striding off the way he had come, hailed the first passing vehicle, telling the man to drive him to 301, Blank Street, the home of Miss Marsh and her mother. The former was

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in one of her "touchy" moods, and took him severely to task for not coming to see her oftener. Exasperated beyond all endurance, he at last blurted out: "Well, there's only one way I can see out of it. We had better get married as soon as possible."

Now, this was *not* quite what Miss Marsh wished for, and she endeavoured to temporise; but Mrs. Marsh happening to come into the drawing-room when the discussion was at its height, promptly settled the matter by deciding the date for them—six weeks hence—not wishing to lose her prospective son-in-law, who, if not equal to her daughter in the matter of wealth, was in every other respect a most desirable connection.

An hour after Ralph found himself on his homeward way, and inwardly blaming himself for having allowed his pique to get the better of his real feelings.

"I must see Rose once more, and then it will be all over, one way or the other. It would be a caddish thing to go and ask for her at this time of night. I'll write a letter. Fool that I am! I don't even know her address. No, but I know what I'll do: wait for her to-morrow as she goes out; she always gives a music lesson each morning about nine o'clock; she told me so herself."

Just before nine o'clock the following morning Rose appeared with her music portfolio under her arm. On seeing Ralph her colour visibly heightened, and she would have passed him by had he not interposed himself before her.

"Well, the damage is done at last."

"What has happened to you? Is it very bad?"

"Oh, no, quite the contrary, I suppose. I am to be married to Miss Marsh in six weeks from now; her mother has settled it all for us."

"Oh," said Rose, trying to smile, although she was now deadly pale.

"I suppose you don't care much," in a forced tone.

"I do, indeed."

"Well, it need not make any difference to us, need it? I shan't want always to be tied to my wife's apron string, and we can resume our pleasant friendship just where we left it off."

"It's wrong of you to say that, and you know it. Oh, but if things were only different!"

"If things were only different!" A light seemed to suddenly break in on him. "By heavens! they shall be; why was I ever so blind; you are worth a dozen of her, and I will tell her so to-day. Yes, this very minute." And before she could stop him, he was gone.

"Ralph, come back! please, come back!"

But if Ralph heard, he did not appear to.

"Mr. Eggleston called just now, mamma, and it's all over between us; this comes of your good-natured interference—not that I mind a bit; I never really cared for him, and it is his loss, not mine."

"What nonsense you talk, child. Mr. Eggleston has a great future before him, and he is a husband any girl might be proud of. Did he assign any reason, may I ask?"

"Only the usual conventional excuse—he had come to the conclusion we were not suited to each other."

"Fiddlesticks! there's a woman at the bottom of it, I'll be bound, and it will be my duty as your parent to find her out and expose him."

"Please do not trouble to do so on my account, he is not worth it."

Once more Ralph and Rose are together. This time it is evening, the time he knows she comes home from her afternoon music lesson.

"Thank goodness I am well out of it, and I shall never marry anybody now, unless," with a short uneasy laugh, "I could marry you, which is impossible."

"Why?" with a startled look on her face.

"Because you are married already, I believe; at least, you told me so."

"I have no recollection of the fact," was the demure reply.

"Do you really mean that?"

"Indeed I do. I am not twenty till next birthday, and I have never been engaged, let alone married."

"Oh! my darling, what an awful mistake I might have made; but it is not too late yet to repair it. Brute that I have been to you, Rose. May I hope that in time you may forgive me, and——"

"Please don't say any more; it can never, never be. I know I have been to blame quite as much, if not more so, than you have; I only answered your advertisement in a joke, but when I saw you, you were so nice and so respectful to me, and it was so dreadfully dreary and dull at home, and so pleasant going about with you, that I——"

"Oh! Rose, my darling! only hear me. I love you more——"

"No, dear, no! You may *think* you do, but you would never forgive yourself if you were to marry a girl who had so far forgotten herself as to answer an advertisement in a matrimonial journal. You have been very, very kind to me, and I shall always remember the happy hours we have spent together. And now it must be all over, please. Let us say good-bye once for all. Remember, you promised me once, as a gentleman, never to try and find out the number of the house I live at, and I shall expect you to keep to your word. Not that it would matter much, as I shall go away at once. And now, good-bye," and her fortitude having at length utterly broken down, she left him without another word.

Ralph's mind was made up without delay. He would remain where he was until he saw her again, all night and all next day as well if need be, for did she not say say she was going away.

All through the long night he paced up and down, and then just before the city was awakening into life his vigil was rewarded by seeing a maid servant emerge from one of the houses—*the* house he knew the position of so well—and, having obtained a cab from the nearest rank, return with it.

Presently one or two modest looking boxes were brought out and placed on the roof, and then, and not until then, did Ralph make up his mind what to do. Engaging the only other cab on the rank, he gave the driver instructions to follow and on no account lose sight of the laden one, giving him at the same time a substantial tip to accelerate his movements. On and on, through what seemed an endless number of streets, and then cab number one entered the terminus of a big railway station. There were not many passengers about so early in the morning, so that Ralph had no difficulty in keeping Rose in sight without himself being seen, and having ascertained her destination, obtained a ticket, and waited until the train was almost starting.

"Stand back there! stand back!" the guard shouted excitedly. But Ralph was not to be denied, and man aged to get into the already moving carriage.

Before the journey was ended, his eloquence had not been wasted. At any rate, he said with a smile, as he helped his companion to alight, "I think we may safely say our love-making has been carried on in a style without precedent."

S. J. F. Newbery.

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IT CAME TO PASS

BY WINIFRED GRAHAM

SUMMARY.

Charlotte, a young girl just out of the schoolroom, is married to Raymond Peel, widower, in his forty-fifth year, notwithstanding the knowledge that his past life has been a bad one. Entering London Society, she meets at Lady Logan's and elsewhere a young musician in whom she is much interested. Mrs. Donnington-Bain, an effusive American actress, calls on her husband.

CHAPTER II. (*Continued.*)

While the mysterious lady visitor related her adventures her eyes were riveted on the pale face of the man. He wore a troubled expression, and seemed ill at ease. The past, which had so nearly been forgotten, came back with a rush, and memories long dead woke afresh to life.

"You are to be congratulated," said Charlotte, coming again to the rescue.

"It isn't a bad life on the whole," declared Mrs. Donnington-Bain. "You meet a variety of people, and the perpetual change of scene is invigorating."

She ran her fingers up and down the silver cord outlining her scarlet bodice, and occasionally bit at her white veil.

"You do not look a day older than when I saw you last, Augusta," Mr. Peel vouchsafed, after a pause.

She shot a grateful glance at him.

"Have you many friends in England?" asked Mrs. Peel.

The actress smiled indulgently.

"So many Americans come regularly to London for their summer holiday that I see a familiar face at every turn," she replied. "They like running over Europe, spending their spare cash amongst foreigners, and of course England gets her little share. But they did not make me forget your husband, Mrs. Peel—old friends rank first. It has been delightful seeing him, and when I am happy I cannot repress my feelings—I feel just inclined to hug you both!"

"They like running over Europe."

Charlotte devoutly hoped she would not carry out her threat, and palpably stiffened.

Mr. Peel cleared his throat, and was about to speak, when Mrs. Donnington-Bain sprang suddenly to her feet.

"Heavens! look at the time," she cried, pointing dramatically to the clock. "I only intended to fly here and see you for two minutes, just to let Raymond know I was in town—I shall be late for dinner! I am tired to death of dining, but it is one of life's most essential duties, and I never shirk it. But, oh! what indigestible dishes they give you in these English hotels, and always under the eternal glare of electricity. I like feeding by candle-light, for eating time is resting time with me. It is my only quiet hour. If I were under housemaid in a lodging-house I couldn't feel more fagged when I go to bed. Life's socialities are killing me!"

Charlotte smiled at her tragic tone, and submitted to a fond embrace.

"I must kiss you and wish you joy with this dear husband of yours," she said, squeezing her hand. "It was so sweet of you to give me such a cordial welcome."

Charlotte looked for a touch of irony in her tone, but apparently it was non-existent.

"I've been using my cousin's, Lord Northtown's, horses," she said, turning to Mr. Peel, "and they were so fresh coming that I was nearly frightened to death. I wonder if you would so far sacrifice yourself as to drive with me to the door of my hotel. I will promise not to detain you a moment longer, but my nerves are so unstrung after the voyage."

To Charlotte's surprise he assented readily, and a look of relief passed over his features.

"You *will* forgive me, Mrs. Peel?" she exclaimed, glancing back over her shoulder as he followed her.

A moment later they were side by side in the carriage while Charlotte stood alone in the deserted drawing-room.

Raymond Peel addressed the woman in a half whisper.

"Why did you not tell me you were coming?" he asked.

Mrs. Donnington-Bain gave a wicked little chuckle, and shrugged her shoulders.

"That was my whim!" she replied.

"I was simply on thorns. I suppose you were sharp enough to see that, Augusta?"

"Rather; but cheer up, old boy. I had no intention of giving you away."

"Listen. My wife knows nothing, *absolutely* nothing, of the past. Not one word to her on the subject—remember that."

His voice, though low, vibrated with intensity.

"Of course," she answered, impatiently. "What do you take me for—a chattering schoolgirl?"

"Have you anything to tell me?" asked Raymond.

"Yes; Lynch is in England."

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"I've been using my cousin's, Lord Northtown's, horses."

"This day is evidently destined to be one of bitter memories and unpleasant revelations. I wanted to wipe out the past, Augusta; but it's no good. The world is too small, far too small to hold us all."

"I did not wish to cast a gloom over your spirits, but you must learn to take things as they come. Try to be more philosophical—like I am, for instance. We have both known trouble in our day. I have been through the Bankruptcy Court and the Divorce Court. My husband is now sleeping with his fathers—he can no longer be the curse of wretched women. Then I have seen my nearest and dearest sentenced to death!"

A groan escaped his lips. He seized her arm, and dug his nails into her flesh. "For the love of Heaven spare me these reminiscences!"

Augusta's lips parted tranquilly in one of the saddest smiles he had ever seen. All her affectation disappeared, and for once she became natural.

"Forgive me," she murmured, with a little catch in her voice. "I have grown hardened and accustomed to disregard the feelings of others. By the way, Raymond, you have not asked after the boy."

He shuddered perceptibly.

"No," he muttered between his teeth; "I did not wish to."

"If I were not so disgracefully extravagant—and I cannot root out my darling sins now in my old age—I would do something handsome for him," she said.

"I have paid you the money regularly."

"Yes, yes; but you hate the very thought of him, and it is not likely you will double—or shall I say treble the sum?"

"No, by Jove!"

"And yet *I* love the boy."

Augusta's eyes drooped, but there was a false ring in her tone.

"He is in England with me now," she continued, "and I am trying to work him up a connection, that he may make a living by music. It is the only thing in the world he cares for. I have succeeded in getting him some pupils, and a few engagements."

"What name does he go by?"

"Derringer; Hugh Derringer. But the profession is so crowded, it would need a very optimistic mind to imagine anything brilliant resulting. Besides, he has a weakly constitution, and can work but little."

"How dared you bring him to England?" said the man, suddenly waking up to the fact of his injuries. "I gave you the money to keep him out of my sight, away at the uttermost ends of the earth. Have I not paid you interest enough for your trouble?"

"You will not see him," said Augusta, confidently, "and you would not know him if you did. This is my destination; good-night, Raymond. How cold your hand is! It chills me through my glove, yet the evening seems close and sultry."

"Yes," he replied. "I can hardly breathe."

"Good-night," she said again, and he re-echoed the words as he turned away.

"Good!" he muttered to himself, sardonically, "good! As if everything connected with this night was not evil."

"I never saw such a woman!" cried Charlotte, discussing Mrs. Donnington-Bain after dinner, "so loud and vulgar, my dear, and what golden hair! I dare say she looks lovely on the stage; large features show to advantage behind the footlights. Even from your study window I pronounced her dangerously handsome. The distance lent enchantment."

"Poor creature! She has seen some rough weather, and is much to be pitied. Her husband ill-treated and deserted her. That is enough to harden a woman at the outset."

Charlotte's eyes softened, as she crept into Raymond's arms.

"I won't say another word against her—I, who have such a good, devoted husband!"

"Leave out the first adjective," he replied, contracting his brows.

"No—*good* always to me. Do you remember, dear, before our marriage you made me promise never to mention your past life? You told me it had been 'a sad and a bad one.' Yes, those were your words, and you asked me if I were willing to take you under any circumstances. I said I would marry you if you were a murderer, with a list of crimes as long as my arm. I do not want to break my promise of silence; but I cannot bear to think of that strange Augusta having known you then, when I was not part of your life."

"Poor little woman! Do not worry your head over the follies and failings of an old man's youth."

"Old!" she laughed, fixing her eyes on the smooth, clear-cut face, which the hand of time had left unfurrowed. "You are only a boy to me! Now, if you come to talk of ancient people, look at that poor, decrepid creature with the grey beard, squeaking a wretched violin under the gas lamp in the street." She leant out of the window as she spoke, and threw him some money. "I wish," she said, with a sigh, "that I had a magic wand, and could transform the lame beggar into Hugh Derringer."

"*Hugh Derringer!* Where—where did you hear that name?"

It was with a strong effort that Raymond steadied his voice.

"Why are you surprised? He was the blue-eyed boy I fell in love with at Lady Logan's."

He bit his lip.

"I should like you to hear him play," she continued, eagerly. "May I give a musical party, and engage him for the evening?"

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"No. Certainly not."

"That is decisive!" she replied, laughing at his stern tone. "I would delight in slipping a ten-pound note into his violin-case like Joseph with his brothers' sacks. He only asks a guinea, and it is not often he gets that. I call it sweating. Oh! Raymond, are you ill?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Your face is so pale, and I felt your hand tremble in mine. Dearest, what is the matter?"

"I have rather a headache; it is very sultry to-night."

"Come and lie down and close your eyes. I will promise not to talk."

She drew him to the sofa. He felt glad to obey her, for

"That is decisive," she replied.

his head was in a whirl. But the pain across his temples had no connection with the atmosphere without; it was caused by harrowing thoughts within, deep down in his secret soul.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. and Mrs. Peel had driven to Sandown. It was a lovely summer afternoon, and the first person they met was Augusta Donnington-Bain. Elaborately attired in purple, shot with peacock green, and surrounded by an admiring group of eminently frivolous young men, the actress planked her money down freely, and appeared in boisterous spirits.

"*A la bonne heure!*" she exclaimed, catching sight of Raymond in the paddock. "My predictions have been verified, for I counted on meeting you to-day. Mrs. Peel, why are you looking so serious? Have you been unfortunate in your selection of winners?"

"This is my first racing experience," replied Charlotte, frankly. "It is bewildering, and I am lost in contemplation."

"Then you have a lot to learn!" laughed Mrs. Donnington-Bain, glancing at the tall young figure with a sense of envy. "You have a great advantage over the *blasé* women around you; it is everything to be fresh in the pursuit of pleasure."

"Do you ever bet?" asked Charlotte, casting a suspicious glance at the actress's pencilled card.

"Such a question," declared Mrs. Donnington-Bain, turning to Raymond, "surprises one by its simplicity! If you want to start a charitable institution, Mrs. Peel, inaugurate a 'Distressed Gambling Ladies' Guild,' and I will apply for a pension on the score of having wasted more money on the turf than any woman in the world. Now, Raymond, are you going to escort me to the stand? Lady Logan is sweeping down upon us, and will keep you here for half an hour. She is like a New Woman let loose on a platform. My nerves become seriously affected in her presence, I assure you."

As she spoke Lady Logan's voice fell on Charlotte's ear.

"How are you, my dear Mrs. Peel—none the worse for this intolerable heat? I feel thoroughly shattered and exhausted, but *you* always look blooming."

With a sigh of relief Charlotte returned the greeting, while Augusta drifted away with Raymond.

"We came in quite a party on Harry's drag," continued Lady Logan, indicating her husband, "and I am sure I got sunstroke on the way down. Isn't it annoying for me? Two tiresome girls failed us at the last moment, and so now I have half-a-dozen men on my hands. It would be but christian charity to let me introduce them, Mrs. Peel. My head racks, and talking is torture."

Charlotte readily assented, glad to escape Mrs. Donnington-Bain.

"This is my old friend Dr. Lynch," said Lady Logan. "He has scarcely been in England a week, and we are making the most of his stay."

Charlotte inclined her head, and smiled graciously. She had a particularly fascinating bow. Dr. Lynch was very tall, very commanding in person, with an air of distinction, and clever, searching eyes. He smiled pleasantly in return, and made some casual remark upon the racing.

"So you have driven through all this dust and heat to see a few horses scamper past a post!" she said, glancing at the upright figure towering above her. He was a modern giant, she thought, with a very noble physique.

"On a day like this it is one of the prettiest sights imaginable to my mind," he replied.

"But there is something unwholesome in the excitement and anxiety," declared Charlotte. "It is only another form of speculation moulded into a pleasure afternoon."

"I am afraid you are too good for this world," he said, with a twinkle in his eyes. "Still, you are wise in your generation, for no vice clings faster than a passion for the turf. I have known it ruin many a rich woman, and yet, on the other hand, I met a sporting old lady who managed to live by it; but she preached the most dreadful doctrines."

His voice and manner pleased Charlotte; they were so frank and unaffected.

"Won't you say you are enjoying yourself in spite of this wicked diversion?" he murmured, as they wandered towards the lawn. "Let us sit here; there are fewer people, and the stand is crowded."

"How long are you staying in England?" she asked.

"Only a month or two, and it is my first holiday for years. I am doctor of a gaol in Sydney. It is rather a gruesome trade."

"Write a book on your experiences of gaol-birds. Poor creatures! I dare say you have reminiscences worth relating."

"Yes, had I the time or the energy."

For a long while they sat together, Charlotte both interested and amused by her new friend's conversation, while he was equally content with her society.

"She is altogether charming," was his mental verdict, Charlotte being a good listener. The art of listening is less common than the art of talking.

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"I hope we may meet again," he said, with a certain fervour that surprised her, as she rose to go.

"I should like to introduce you to my husband," she replied. "He went into the paddock after the last race. Will you come and help me find him?"

"With pleasure. Strange to say I did not catch your name. Reade, wasn't it?"

"No, but here is my husband."

Looking up, he saw Raymond Peel standing before him with Mrs. Donnington-Bain. At the same moment Charlotte casually murmured an introduction. Her husband bent his head slightly, paling beneath the doctor's look of hatred, who neither bowed nor spoke, but glared into Raymond's face, which was white as death. Would that moment never end? There was an expression of unutterable loathing and contempt in the darkness of his eyes as Dr. Lynch turned sharply on his heel, slightly raising his hat to Charlotte, and was gone.

"Well!" declared Mrs. Donnington-Bain, "if that is not a straight cut," breaking into a short laugh. "It has given me a chill feeling of antiquity. He might have done the civil for the sake of my *beaux yeux!* Civility is cheap, but Lynch only indulges expensive tastes. Take me away—that man has disgusted me!"

Charlotte could hardly realise the insult offered to her husband. Her first sensation was horror that anyone should treat him with such terrible disdain. Then a sickening sense of dread suddenly overcame her, an instinct that all was not well with Raymond, as she looked up at him, a deadly fear knocking at her heart. Mrs. Donnington-Bain, sharply observant, was startled by the expression in Charlotte's eyes, having regarded her as cold, reserved, and incapable of feeling.

"What was the meaning of it?" she asked, clasping her hands together, and trembling from unusual excitement.

Her husband's lips quivered, and his eyes shifted nervously. He seemed at a loss for words. His marked reticence dismayed her, as Mrs. Donnington-Bain spoke with quick precision.

"It is quite an absurd story," she said. "Dr. Lynch and Raymond quarrelled over some land in that wild and savage country we call Australia. The doctor made himself ridiculous, and went to law about it. He was mad at losing the case, and has cut his adversary ever since."

Charlotte appeared only half-satisfied with the explanation, for the doctor's manner had frightened her, and she was watching Raymond's face. Already she dimly suspected some unknown shame and disgrace.

"Come, it is time we went," he said.

The thought of a dark irrevocable past of which she must never speak rose up now spectre-like before Charlotte, while her face blanched at the remembrance of the insult she had witnessed.

"Good-bye," she murmured, giving her hand to Mrs. Donnington-Bain, with a smile plainly covering a heavily-burdened heart.

As Charlotte turned to follow her husband, she found herself facing Lady Logan.

"Going already, Mrs. Peel?" she cried. "Shall we meet at the Wilson's to-night?"

"No, I'm afraid not. Raymond does not like musical evenings."

"But if you have no other engagement, do come with me. It is a great mistake to stay at home, and you can easily send your husband to the club. May I call for you at half-past ten? Hugh Derringer is going to play."

"I should love to hear him," said Charlotte, trying to speak lightly. "But are you well enough?"

"My dear, I never let a headache interfere with existing arrangements, or I should not be here to-day. That is one of my little perversities."

"Is Dr. Lynch going?"

"No; he has a Freemason's banquet to-night, and will speechify till the early hours. He has robbed me of Harry's escort, so let us be grass widows together."

Involuntarily a sigh of relief escaped Charlotte.

"Didn't you find Dr. Lynch delightful?" asked Lady Logan. "Nobody could be dull in his society. He is such a dear creature!"

"Do you think so?" speaking coldly.

"Yes; but I see you don't agree with me."

"He has no manners," Charlotte explained, with a pitiful glance towards the retreating figures of Augusta and her husband. "Good-bye. I will come to-night."

"Do not fail me!" cried Lady Logan, waving adieu. "You must not let Mr. Peel grow fogeyish. Oust him when he suggests a quiet evening at home, there is nothing better for the nerves than life, gaiety, and movement."

Hugh Derringer had so strangely interested Charlotte that she could not resist the temptation of accompanying her friend that evening.

"It will divert my mind," she thought, "and I must try to drown annoyance in dissipation."

So, determined to shake off her worries, she sought the silver lining to her cloud, and as Raymond would give her no further information concerning Dr. Lynch, ceased questioning him, and endeavoured to forget the unpleasant incident.

Being cheerful by nature Charlotte decided to enjoy the evening, and found herself once again listening to the young violinist with the sad eyes.

"He is one of my charities," Lady Logan informed her. "I champion his cause pecuniarily."

Determined to renew her acquaintance with Hugh Derringer, Charlotte found him after his performance in a deserted boudoir, leaning against an open window, alone, and meditative.

"What are you thinking of?" she asked, coming gently behind him, unobserved.

He started visibly.

"You have not forgotten me?" she said, holding out her hand.

"No," he replied. "I could never forget your kind words of encouragement; but I fancy if I answered your question my thoughts would somewhat surprise you."

"Then may I be surprised?"

"I am speculating on my own identity—what I am, and whence I came. You see before you merely a waif and stray—just a spar of wreckage on life's shore."

"But rich in genius," she interpolated. "No mean inheritance!"

"Yet I am more forlorn than you imagine, for I know nothing of my parentage. I doubt if I was ever born!" with an attempt at a smile. "I believe I was invented."

Some intonation in his voice brought Raymond to her mind.

"Can it be possible that you are entirely ignorant of your origin, nameless, in fact?"

He bowed his head.

"But how were you brought up?" she asked, with sympathetic interest.

"A beautiful woman adopted me, a stray child from the workhouse, and treated me as her son. She was not rich, yet never repented her generosity. Remarkably self-sacrificing, wasn't it, Mrs. Peel?"

"Then why do you speak so bitterly of her?"

"Because in reality she is neither charitable nor good. Why, then, did she burden herself with the care of a child? Children I have more recently discovered are her greatest aversion. I can conceive no other reason for the so-called act of benevolence, than that I am her son, and she is ashamed to own me."

His words were checked by a low, deep cough that shook the slender form, and contracted the muscles of his face with pain.

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"How ill you seem!" said Charlotte, whose heart ached for him.

"It is down here in my chest," he replid, apologetically; "and my throat is weak—relaxed, you know. It hampers me with my work."

"Would you mind shutting the window?—I am cold," she declared, shuddering to think he had been breathing the night air. "I suppose," she continued, "that I ought not to ask the name of the lady who adopted you?"

"She makes no secret of it, and, even if she did, I could trust *you* before all the world."

"On what authority?"

"My natural instinct, which has never played me false."

"And her name?"

"Augusta Donnington-Bain."

Charlotte stared at him dumfounded, with a certain fervour of conviction. That look which seemed so strangely, horribly familiar to her, what might it not mean? Her eyes were blinded by a mist—she could see nothing, and the room swam round.

During the momentary pause a graceful woman in white entered the boudoir.

"Will you oblige us with some more music, Mr. Derringer?" she said, not pausing for a reply, since he was paid to wait upon her pleasure.

"Give me your address," murmured Charlotte, faintly. "Or are you at Mrs. Donnington-Bain's hotel?"

He smiled at her question.

"Oh, no! I have a room over a baker's shop. It is not romantic."

Charlotte shuddered as she took his card.

"Thank you," she said. "Good-night."

"Why are you going so soon, Mrs. Peel?" asked Lady Logan. "You look very pale. I hope you are not ill."

"Oh! no; only tired."

"Has General Wilson been fatiguing you with his endless comments on science and politics?"

"I have been studying the science of sciences—humanity!" replied Charlotte.

"No doubt you made some excellent investigations, well worthy of solution! Remember me to that nice husband of yours, my dear, and bear in mind that rest and sleep are advantageous to the young. I am old, and will, therefore, wait for a skirt dance and a French recitation."

With her mind in a whirl of mingled feelings, Charlotte sought solitude. Though trembling at her own thoughts, she still hoped they might be due to an over-wrought imagination. Until her doubts were proved not a breath of suspicion should fall upon Raymond, and so she drove sadly home, shutting her sorrow away in her heart. Till daylight dawned she lay sleepless and miserable, trying to deaden the anguish of her soul, but the darkness into which her wide, open eyes stared was peopled by visions of ghastly possibilities.

She rose late, painfully conscious that her struggle to live these suspicions down had ended in failure.

Raymond noticed Charlotte avoided him, but could not account for her manner. The crushing blow of the previous evening seemed to have frozen her. Once or twice when he addressed her she was conscious of a deep flush on her cheek, while her answers were short and hurried. There were dark lines, too, under her eyes, and her expression was strained and hard.

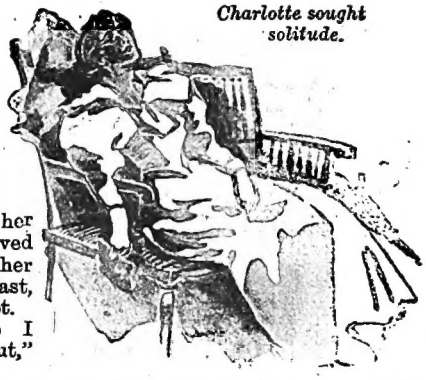
"What are you going to do this afternoon?" he asked.

"Drive, most probably," she replied, with a slight intonation of uneasiness.

She crossed the room and opened the piano, as though to avoid further conversation.

"Then do not expect me back before dinner," he said, after a pause.

"Very well. I have several calls to pay, and much else to think of."



Charlotte sought solitude.

"Why are you so pre-occupied to-day, Charlotte? I have never seen you more constrained and quiet."

"Must I be always laughing?"

He came to her side, but she moved away quickly, her heart beating fast, and her face hot.

"It is time I dressed to go out," she said.

Raymond did not pretend to understand women, and he supposed the fatigue of the season was affecting Charlotte's temper. She was pale with anxiety as she drove off in her brougham, leaning back with a sense of prostration, her hands clasped in nervous weakness on the unopened book in her lap. Presently the horses drew up before a baker's shop, where she alighted, and entered with faltering steps.

"I have come to inquire for Mr. Derringer," she said. "He seemed unwell last night."

"It was a chilly evening for July," replied the woman behind the counter, shaking her head solemnly, "and the young gentleman was not fit to be out of his bed then, with the weather so changeable, too—one day cold and the next 'ot. He looked real bad when he came in, so I sent for Doctor Potts. It's the consumption, ma'am, but 'e won't take no care of 'isself, and 'im such a nice young gentleman—a *real* young gentleman!"

She pressed a dirty duster to her eyes, and sniffed ominously.

"Is Mr. Derringer at home now?"

Charlotte's voice shook slightly as she spoke.

"No, lady—no," continued her informant, with a long-drawn sigh. "I only wish 'e were. The doctor told 'im to stay in bed, but 'e's gone off to give a lesson in Terra Cotta Villas."

"Then give me the doctor's address," said Charlotte, in a calm deliberate tone, suddenly making a resolve.

"Yes, ma'am; 23, Southampton Gardens. Doctor Potts thinks as it's the sooty air what's got in 'is lungs. The rain was coming down 'ard last night, but 'e just didn't seem to notice it."

Charlotte waited to hear no more, but drove straight to Dr. Potts, from whom she received a very grave report. If Hugh Derringer remained in London he could not be expected to live, and the only chance of saving him was an immediate change.

As she left the doctor's house Charlotte decided to consult her husband upon the mystery of Mrs. Donnington-Bain's adopted child, and seek his advice as the surest means of getting at the truth. She let down the brougham window, and gazed out with a stony stare, as one accustomed to commanding emotion.

Suddenly her eyes fell upon a man on the pavement.

Though confusion all but took her breath away, Charlotte's first impulse at sight of him was to stop the carriage. Dr. Lynch had seen her, and, acting on a swift determination, she pulled the check string. His consternation was evident, as Charlotte, feeling terribly conscious, addressed him with a desperate effort. Already she was covered with vexation at her hasty act, but it was too late to draw back.

"I want to speak to you, Dr. Lynch," she began, hesitatingly. "Will you drive with me a little way, that I may have an opportunity?"

Keenly alive to the awkwardness of the situation, Dr. Lynch sprang into the carriage, and seated himself with a sense of incongruity at her side.

(To be continued.)

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THE MAN WHO WAS REALLY GREAT.

By G. B. Burgin.

(Author of "His Lordship," etc.)

I.

Silas Hubbard was a sublimely, heroically great man. He maintained this point himself on many a hard fought political field; and if one cannot believe such a personal statement, then some of the world's so-called heroes have lived and lied in vain. Four Corners folk knew that Silas meant what he said; if they failed to realise his meaning, he reluctantly supported it with revolver shots. To use a technical illustration, he was accustomed to "lead out"—with his revolver—the intervening spaces when anyone presumed to doubt his veracity. As he lived alone (save for the society of his beautiful daughter, a girl of thirteen) on the brink of the swamp, his audiences, though select, were generally small; but there was always the mitigating consolation of the post-office within a quarter of a mile; and there Silas Hubbard could hold forth on most subjects, secure of the silent sympathy of Constable Wrong, who received a free copy of the *Four Corners Gazette* every week, and felt morally bound to support the editor's opinions in return for so munificent a gift.

Soon after Silas had bestowed this great boon on Constable Wrong, *The Gazette* secured an addition to its staff in the shape of a boy of thirteen, who burst through the Bush at the back of the house, one evening, nodded slightly to Silas, and made himself very much at home on the verandah. His deeply-set dark eyes shone out beneath penthouse brows, and his chin had a cleft in the centre. One bleeding toe appeared through his boot; the left foot lacked a sole; and his general appearance suggested that a bath would not be an inappropriate or superfluous step.

Although the snow had but recently gone, the brief Canadian spring clothed every inch of ground with swiftly-growing blades of grass. Already myriads of mosquitoes pestered the sleek kine as they emerged panting from the Bush and slowly sought the village, their swollen udders craving the customary pressure of human hands. Fire-flies flickered through the long grass, or faded away into the dewy dusk of oncoming night, whilst the musical monotone of the never-satiated little sawmill in the creek, as the "night-shift" came on, and the circular-saw ate its way through monster tree-trunks, mingled with the roar of the Falls and the faint lap-lap of the river. The village itself was situated parallel to the river, and consisted of one row of wooden houses, a disused and dismantled fort—sole remnant of the time when the red man was feared in the land—a Presbyterian church with a tin spire, ten taverns, a court-house and gaol in one, six stores, and a rough stone Catholic church with painted windows on which the setting sun shone redly down.

The boy comprehended the village with one glance. "You run this thing?" he queried, pointing in the direction of the printing office. (A tame turkey, with literary tendencies, was making a light supper off the broken types which strewed the ground, whilst a long-bearded, patient-looking goat tried to digest a tin tomato-can containing printers' paste). Silas was taken at a disadvantage, and stammered "Ye-es."

"You run this thing?"

"I'll stay," said the boy. "Guess I can run you in some new wrinkles. Don't mind thanking me. Got any pie about. Genuine pie, not printers'."

"Maybe," sarcastically said Silas, "you'll join the staff and edit me."

The boy fixed a frank gaze on him. "Guess I will. You need it badly—with a razor."

Silas's first impulse was to pitch his unbidden guest into the creek at the back of the building. Before he could carry it out, Miranda appeared bearing a most bounteous provision of pie. "The poor fellow's starving, Dad. I've brought him some of my pie."

The hot-headed adventurer's hasty answer died away unspoken in her presence. He gazed intently, not at the pie, but at Miranda's beautiful blue eyes, the glorious masses of black hair which hung over her head and shoulders, and noted the proud curve of the girl's upper lip, her gleaming teeth and dimpled chin, not cleft like a dint in granite after the fashion of his own. She wore a frock of grey homespun, on her head a red ribbon; in her hand was the platter heaped with pie. As the boy's eyes dropped, hers fairly danced with fun and the consciousness of coming empire, the proffered pie remaining between them in mid-air.

"Eat," said the girl, shyly, her long lashes dropping in their turn.

The boy mechanically took the plate. "May I ask what place you hold in this house?"

"You want to edit Dad," replied the girl: "I'm going to edit you as a punishment for your impudence."

Silas grimly regarded them. "She'll do it, my boy. Better go away—you're welcome to the pie—and chop wood."

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The youth's retort was scarcely warrantable. He looked apprehensively at the pie on his plate. "Did you make it?" he murmured.

"Yes," the girl faltered, with a sense of fearsome guilt lying suddenly on her soul.

"Show me the heroes of a nation," said the youngster, taking a huge bite out of a slice—"Show me the heroes of a nation, and I will show you the men who have managed to survive the ordeal of home-made pie."

"Does it disagree with you?" faltered Miranda.

"Not yet." The young fellow looked at her critically. "Confess now, and I will absolve your soul. Didn't you say to yourself this morning, 'To-day I will arise and make my first pie and try a piece of it on father.' Didn't you, now?"

"Ye-es."

"As the day drew on, and you knew what you had deliberately put in that pie, you hesitated. In the heat of the noontide you could doom your father to destruction; but as the calm shadows of night fell about this peaceful home your purpose failed you. You said, mindful that this white-headed man is your father, 'My soul shall be spared so monstrous a crime. I'll try it instead on the first tramp who comes along.' Can you deny it?"

"You know I can't."

"Well, you needn't (he took another bite out of the pie). So far, it is a very good pie—very good indeed. I don't remember to have partaken of so ethereal a pie for weeks. There is nothing at all paleolithic about it."

With one blow from his leg-of-mutton fist.

The girl, mollified by this generous compliment, asked him to stay for the night, and Silas nodded a surly assent to her invitation. Thus it was that Fergus Crane slept that night and for many succeeding nights with the faint ripple of the wandering Ottawa river in his ears, and the sweet west wind, laden with piny odours, blowing softly through the open lattice as the stars peered solemnly over the tree-tops into his little room.

But after that first meeting Silas lost all faith in this pretentious boy, who knew so much more about the way to manage a newspaper than he himself did. Silas would not admit, what everyone else shrewdly surmised, that jealousy was the dominant reason for his dislike. Miranda loved the boy; he was her constant companion and delight; her father held the second place in her heart. The night which brought Fergus such peaceful repose occasioned Silas nothing but the saddest unrest. He loathed the very sight of the lad, although for more than a year there was no open manifestation of their mutual dislike. Moreover, on one or two occasions Silas felt a glow of almost parental pride in Fergus's ability when a more than usually trenchant article from the pen of that truculent youth had aroused a desire on the part of Four Corners' folk to lynch the legally-responsible head of the concern. Fergus, however, regarded the matter as a joke, boldly avowed the authorship of the article, borrowed a big shot-gun, and expressed his willingness to receive a committee of any six citizens, with or without revolvers, to discuss the question, provided they would permit him to open the argument. The lad's laughing defiance had the desired effect, although many leading citizens went about vowing that he was not destined to die in his boots.

Miranda vainly did her best to mend matters. Then something occurred which might have been foreseen by anyone but Silas, who was always ready to under-estimate the personal charm of this waif from the Bush—a charm which, in spite of his jealousy, often made him wish that Miranda had been born a boy with all Fergus's tremendous dash and obstinacy. When Fergus stated that he was about to do something, it was generally done. Silas had a dim prescience that the boy could revolutionise the universe if he chose to set about it. This foreknowledge made him uneasy; there was no telling what might happen next. One day, the thunderbolt fell under his nose, and caused him to commit an act of brutality of which he was ashamed afterwards when his hasty action could not be remedied, and Miranda, for the first time in her life, ceased to think that her father could do no wrong.

One summer evening about fourteen months after Fergus's arrival at the Four Corners, Miranda was in the printing office talking to him. The turkey—it weighed four or five pounds more, owing to its constant accumulation of broken type—which was a disinterested spectator from the doorway, noticed that Fergus's arm was round Miranda's waist. "I'm going to marry you," he said, flinging back his handsome head; "but I shall never make money enough to do it here. Besides, every night the river calls me: 'Come away into the world. You're a stranded log here. Come and taste the world's delights. There's Fame in the world—and Fame is good; there's Love in the world—and Love is good; there's Wealth in the world—and Wealth is good; they all wait for you. Get up. Seek them. Taste them. They're not here, save Love; the world passes this place by as it passes the monks of La Trappe at Two Mountains. Don't ripen and rot here. Come!'"

Miranda drew without the shelter of his arm. "Go. I don't wish you to stay; you would only break your heart and hate me. Come back some day; you've promised. Bring your world with you, lay it at my feet; I shall decide whether to pick it up. But I will be second nowhere. Go to your world, embrace her, weary of her; then come back and ——", she laughed—"tell me whether you prefer her to me."

The lad drew her to him. "You are right. Some day

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I'll bring you the world—as much of it as I can carry, at least—or (he pointed to the moon as it sailed over the pine tops) would you prefer that?"

The girl stretched up her pretty hands to it with a longing gesture. "It's as yellow as gold, but, ah me! how lonely to be up there with only the little stars."

"Ah, but they look at it."

"The moon doesn't want to be looked at unless ——"

"Unless?"

"She can look back at her peer."

The boy kissed her. "I will remember that."

"And this," cried a furious voice, as Silas smote him to the floor with one blow from his leg-of-mutton fist.

The boy bounded to his feet and laid hold of an iron crowbar as Miranda rushed between them. Then he laughed lightly, tossed the bar into a corner, and wiped away the dust from his face. "I've eaten your pie, or I'd kill you."

Silas walked to the door. It hurt him that Miranda should shrink away as he passed. "Git," he said, relapsing into the vernacular of his boyhood and utterly disregarding the laboriously-acquired grammatical culture of half a century. "Git out of this. I don't want to see your face agin."

The boy laughed and kissed Miranda. "I can catch the night-boat for Montreal. Look out for me, Miranda. I'll return and bring the world with me."

He ran hastily up to the garret, emerged with a bundle containing his few goods and chattels, waved one hand with gay good-nature to Silas, who was too proud to bid him stay, and turned towards the wharf after again kissing Miranda. "Don't you hear the night-boat coming? the churning of her paddles? the roustabuts' cries? Those old screech-owls, the Fates, are whistling for me; the river's calling 'Come!' Remember, Miranda, if anyone but yourself uses my garret I'll never forgive you. It's going to be a show place at a dollar a head some day. Good-bye; good-bye." And he set off at a run. as the boat fussed up to the wharf and the deck-hands began to dump down apple barrels with lightning-like rapidity.

Miranda gazed after him through a mist of tears, passed her father without a word, and entered the house.

An hour later Silas went to Miranda's door to bid her good-night, but she was not there. He climbed to the garret and looked in.

Everything was strewn about. Miranda had moved her dainty belongings up the rough stairs, and was arranging them one by one. He would have remonstrated, but a glance at her firm-set features and resolute chin deterred him from all speech. Once Silas awoke in the middle of the night. It seemed to him that he heard someone sob away up in the roof. He stuffed his fingers in his ears, resolving to follow Fergus Crane to Montreal in the morning and entreat him to return.

But when Silas carried out his intention there was no tracing the lad. He had not been to any of the city printing-offices; no one knew anything about him. Miranda greeted Silas affectionately on his return.

"You've done all you could, dad. You never heard Fergus say a thing he didn't carry out, did you?"

"N-no, can't say I have," answered the old man. "Sorry I hit him."

"You'll be sorrier for it some day when he brings me the world."

The old man sniffed. "What!"

Miranda smiled. "He'll bring me the whole world or—nothing!"

"Guess he'll find nothing easier to carry," said Silas, turning away to the pump.

II.

Miranda waited the traditional seven years for her world, but without getting it. During these seven years she became a beautiful young woman much sought after by the gilded youths of the Ottawa Valley. Her father sometimes taunted her after the manner of the heathen when railing at a Christian's god. "Perchance he sleepeth or tarrieth in strange lands, seeking a lever wherewith to raise the world." Then the old man would become more colloquial and lament Miranda's infatuation for Fergus Crane. From time to time he read her extracts from English papers, showing the great growth in reputation of one Sylvanus Tree, who had taken the literary world by storm with an insolent confidence which almost courted disaster. "Now, if that fellow Crane had had the gumption of this chap," the old man declared, "he might have made a living, and brought you back something worth having. That's the sort of man I like. Now, listen while I read you the opening chapter of his great story, 'Why Did She Do It?'"

Miranda put her fingers to her ears. "I won't! I won't! I won't!" she said. "I don't care what she did or why she did it. I know she oughtn't to, anyway. If Fergus has been unfortunate you ought to pity him, not jeer at his failure when you know his success is everything to me. I mean to marry him whether he succeeds or not. I hate that man Tree's stories, although I've never read them. I'm sure he's cruel and bumptious, and doesn't deserve success."

Silas doggedly turned over the paper, readjusted his spectacles, and continued to read. Presently he looked up. "I'll eat my hat if that fell—hulloa!"

A bronzed, footsore, dusty, dirty tramp came limping out of the Bush just in the same way that Fergus Crane had done more than eight years ago. A fierce moustache hid his mouth, his cheeks bristled with a three days' beard, his clothes were tattered; in short, a timid man passing this tramp in a city would have thrown him alms, a country farmer would have let loose his dogs, a merchant locked up his wares. Miranda's heart leapt within her. Her hero had returned defeated, dirty, footsore, yet indomitable as of old. She felt ashamed of her dainty and delicate summer dress, with its pretty ribbons and billowy waves of muslin. Ought she not to descend from the verandah, don her coarsest garb, stand beside him, and attune her circumstances to his, lest he should think that she condemned him for being defeated in the battle of life?

Fergus halted, cast a quizzical look at Miranda, and—waited.

Moved by some magnetic force in Miranda's glance, Silas grunted a surly welcome. "Got the world with you?" he asked, "or left it down on the wharf?"

Miranda's hand was on the old man's lips before he had finished speaking. Then she turned to Fergus, who stood comically and shamelessly holding out a bronzed paw, and put her slim, cool fingers in his. "Sit down here a minute, and I'll have your old room ready for you. No one but myself has used it since you left home."

She slipped hastily away into the house, leaving Fergus Crane and Silas sitting just where they had sat so many years ago, with the exception that directly Miranda disappeared Fergus lost his somewhat jaunty

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air. He seemed fatigued, disappointed, faint of heart. "I reckon I talked too tall," he said, tickling his bristly chin with the end of a long grass.

"The old place is open to you—you and your world!" said Silas, continuing to read with secret annoyance. It was a disappointment to him that the armour of youth had been stripped from this once dashing free-lance, who was now little better than a broken-down tramp. Only success could justify Miranda's attitude towards Fergus Crane; and Fergus Crane was not clad as a man who has succeeded; he did not come with costly jewels on his fingers, in his mouth an expensive cigar, on his feet the shiny patent-leather boots beloved by millionaires. There were no servants to obey his slightest nod, no regal piles of trunks to be brought up from the wharf. No; the man was just a broken-down, wandering printer, who had, doubtless, an unlimited power of drinking whiskey; and not even Miranda could inspire him to attempt anything better. Miranda would marry Fergus—that was Miranda all over; and the only thing to do was to secure the property to be settled on her so that Fergus Crane could not touch it. Curiously enough, before Miranda came back, Silas felt himself far more kindly disposed towards Fergus than if that braggart had returned in a blaze of glory. Fergus had always held the whip-hand before; now it was different; and Silas meant to use the whip that Providence had placed in his hands.

"Is my world!"

But the irrepressible Fergus, complacently ignoring the past, worked cheerfully away in the office of the *Four Corners Gazette*, setting up his own leaders with a slowness which lacked all his former precision. The old man was not inclined to forego the advantages which this fact gave him, but Fergus never retorted. There was a gleam of amusement in his eyes, that was all; and he went on setting type with a clumsiness which convinced Miranda that it was long since he had done an honest day's work. Not that the knowledge made any difference in her feeling for him. Whatever Fergus did was right; if the Fates had been unkind, his luck must change. Gifted with a woman's keen insight, she soon saw that her father was struggling against a positive affection for Fergus—an affection which he was so fearful of displaying, that he led him the life of a dog. One of the villagers, seeing much patient forbearance on the part of Fergus, attempted a similar course of action. The next moment he went sailing through the air, and landed on his back with a sickening thud which nearly jarred his teeth out. Silas, who witnessed this feat, chuckled, and became more unbearable than ever, well-knowing that for some inscrutable reason Fergus would endure all his quillets and gibes, and never treat him in the same way.

It was some time before Miranda secured an interview with her fallen knight. He did not avoid her, but simply failed to make opportunities. At last she found him alone on the verandah one evening, smoking the pipe of contemplation, instead of "setting up" inspired leaders about a barn which had just been erected in the village.

"When are we going to be married?" Miranda demanded, abruptly.

Fergus looked at his shabby clothing with undisguised amusement. "You don't think we ought to risk it under present circumstances?" he asked. "Besides, I've broken my word."

"How?" inquired Miranda.

"I promised to bring you back the world."

"Well?"

"Well?"

"Must I tell you" (the expression of her eyes was something wonderful to behold) "that this"—she touched his ragged coat lightly—"is my world!"

Fergus drew a long breath. "You mean it?"

"Of course I mean it. You don't think I'm going to insult myself by doubting you?"

He drew another long breath. "I never thought of it in that way," he said. "I—I wanted to try an experiment."

The unlooked-for appearance of Silas put an end to the conversation for the present, and Fergus walked away. Silas carried a letter in his hand.

"What is it?" asked Miranda, discontentedly. "Do you know, I had almost made Fergus consent to marry me." She looked bitterly at her father. "I have almost to ask him to keep his word, because he is poor and won't take advantage of the situation. What do you think he cares more about than making a success? I'm sure you'll never guess."

"N-no," said the old man, dubiously; "don't know that I can."

"He wants to make you believe in him. That is partly why he has come back."

The old man looked at her in sudden anger. "Ain't I trying to believe in him? Haven't I been striving to, for your sake, all these years?" he asked. "He's a miserable skunk, or he'd have succeeded. The world's generally right—it doesn't make mistakes. Now, you've taught him to think it doesn't matter a shuck."

"It doesn't," said Miranda, calmly. "When people love, nothing matters. I love him more than ever for the way he puts up with your brutality. If I were a man, and you were not my father, I'd horsewhip you myself."

Dashing away at her type-case.

"I've only been trying to rouse him," said Silas, slightly ashamed, "to get up and do something."

"I wouldn't try that way if I were you, Dad," said the girl. "You might go too far. He's very patient, but I think he looks upon you as a penance."

The old man turned the conversation. "Here's a letter from a young English lord who's passing through to the Springs to-morrow. He's dabbled in literature,

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and has heard so much of 'the primitive simplicity of Canadian printing offices from his friend, W. D. Howells, that he will do himself the honour of calling on me to-morrow.' I'm not a truckler to the British aristocracy," continued Silas, with modest pride, "particularly hereditary aristocracy; but I'm going to show this man our office at its best. Fergus sets type so badly now that I daren't trust him to show off. You must come in to-morrow morning—he'll be here at eleven—and set up a column as fast as you can. Don't say anything to Fergus, mind. It might hurt his feelings. I don't know whether I ought to address this fellow as 'Your Lordship;' I fancy the best way will be not to call him anything at all. His name's Donnington. Crest, an eagle upside down, with a rat in its claws. Wonder what that means?"

Miranda thought that it must mean something unpleasant for the rat, but offered no explanation. The next morning found her, clad in a snowy apron and sleeves upturned to the elbow, dashing away at her type-case with a speed that roused Fergus's admiring envy. "I'd no idea I'd fallen off so much myself," he said, leisurely flicking a few letters into the type-holder. "I've almost forgotten how to feel for the nick in the letters, so as to get them right side up."

Fergus's easy-going expression changed to one of horror as Silas appeared in the doorway preceding a sandy-haired, tall young fellow, who was dressed in a light, thin, grey suit, and wore white spats over shining shoes.

"Hang it!" muttered Fergus, trying to slip behind a case.

Lord Donnington gave an amused stare of recognition at Fergus, and screwed a little circular glass into his right eye. "Bai Jove, Twee," he said, "so this is your twip to Patagonia! Vewey good! Vewey good! You're taking time enough to get there, bai Jove. Vewey good. Vewey good, indeed!"

"Who's this well-dressed idiot?" demanded Fergus, abruptly. "And where's his keeper?"

Lord Donnington put up his eyeglass again, and let it drop with a dismayed expression. "Ha! ha! Sylvanus; that's vewey good—vewey good. 'Well-dwessed idiot' is good. Personal, but good, bai Jove!" He turned and saw Miranda looking at him with widely-opened eyes. "Intwoduce me, my dear sir," he said to Silas; "intwoduce me, if Twee won't."

"My daughter, Lord Donnington," said Silas, stiffly. "This machine, O Lord——"

"My lord," prompted Miranda, in a very subdued whisper.

"Nevah mind the machine," said Lord Donnington, with a courteous bow to Miranda. "I want to know, you know, why Twee's callin' me names—callin' me nasty names, bai Jove."

"Who is this man?" asked Silas, seizing Fergus by the arm, and pulling him roughly into the middle of the floor.

Lord Donnington put up his eyeglass again. "Oh, come, I say," he said, feebly, "who is he? Why, you're havin' a game with me, bai Jove. He's——"

"Yes?" eagerly demanded Miranda, clasping Fergus by the other arm. "Who is he, my lord?"

"Sylvanus Twee," said his lordship. "Bites wooks—I mean wites books—you know. People go mad about 'em. Nevah could see much in 'em myself."

Silas seized the bewildered peer by the arm and loosed his hold of Fergus. "He isn't the author of 'Why Did She Do It?'"

"That's vewey good—vewey good."

"That's the man, and a vewey good fellow, too," said Lord Donnington; "though what's he up to, bai Jove, I can't make out, I weally can't, you know. 'Well-dwessed idiot,' and all that sort of thing you know, Twee. 'Where's his keepah!' It's wude. Beastly wude; and doosid bad form, too, you know."

"It is, Donnington," said Fergus; "but if you weren't such an ass you'd have seen I didn't want to be recognised just yet. I was trying an experiment."

"You're a twyin' expewiment yourself, Twee," said Lord Donnington, only half placated. "Bettah come with me to the Spwings and have it out."

Fergus held out his hand. "All right, old fellow. You took me by surprise. I wanted to introduce you to my future wife myself, that's all."

Lord Donnington smiled and produced his note-book. "Ah," he said, making an elaborate entry, "I compwehend. I'm goin' to be a week at the Spwings. Been eatin' too much, and all that sort of thing; got to dwink too much of the beastly wataws to make it wight again. Come and see me."

"Thanks; afraid I haven't time," said Fergus. "Shall hope to meet you at 'The New Vagabonds' dinner in London during November. Good-bye."

Lord Donnington made another note in his little book, fixed the eyeglass in his left eye this time, bowed gracefully to Miranda, and slowly went out to the stage-coach, the eyeglass again falling as he climbed to his seat.

Silas looked at Fergus; Fergus looked at Silas Miranda looked at them both.

"You needn't apologise," said Fergus, to his future father-in-law. "'Tisn't at all necessary."

"I wasn't going to," said Silas, intractable to the last.

"Let me be his apology," smiled Miranda, to the man who was "weally gweat."

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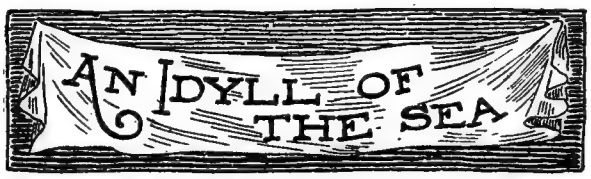

Night on the ocean; a gentle breeze swelled the white sails of the *Seagull* as she ploughed her way steadily southward over the restless bosom of the Atlantic. I lay stretched lazily upon a bale of sail-cloth, my eyes fixed far overhead upon the delicate tangle of ropes and yards etched against the starry sky.

The waves, parted by the good ship's prow, dashed in measured beats against her sides; from the rigging arose at intervals a deep musical murmur, as from the strings of a gigantic wind-harp.

Beautiful and revivifying, after the fierce glow of day, is the summer night on tropic seas, and I was enjoying it to the full. We were bound for Rio, and the voyage was two-thirds over.

I was thinking, as I lay there under the stars, of many things—of the home which I had left in search of health and distraction from painful thoughts, and perhaps in the hope of restoring my shattered confidence in human nature; for things had gone wrong with me, and I was indulging at the time in that sort of spurious cynicism which besets some men when life first presents itself stripped of shams and illusions.

All at once my reverie was disturbed by the wail of a child from the cabin below; I knew the sound. Among the passengers was a young woman in widow's weeds, accompanied only by a boy of four or five years. Nothing was known of her beyond the self-evident fact that she was young and beautiful, and that by the advice of physicians she was taking the boy—her only child—on this voyage, in the hope of restoring his strength, wasted by a long illness. A forlorn hope, indeed. It was plain to the most indifferent eye that the boy had been failing from the day we left London, as it seemed from sheer lack of vitality and consequent wasting of the tissues.

It was a sight to move the hardest heart—this young mother, worn to a shadow with long watching, her whole being absorbed by the passionate mother-love that refused, in the very face of despair, to relinquish hope.

Urged on by sympathy for her sad and solitary state, I, like other passengers, had offered such services as suggested themselves; like the others, I had been gently, but firmly, repulsed. To no one would the mother for a moment delegate the charge that was sapping her own life.

Shrinking from notice and avoiding all other companionship, she brooded over the fragile being who was slipping surely and all too rapidly from her clinging grasp.

The cry came up from the cabin again and again, shattering my reverie and filling me with uncomfortable forebodings. It was evident that the end was near, and, physician that I was, and cynic as I tried to believe myself, the thought of the young mother's despair disturbed and pained me.

With a selfish, yet perhaps natural prayer that the child might live at least until the land was reached, I rose on my elbow, and by way of diverting my thoughts, addressed myself to the sailor who was on watch at that hour. He leant against the foremast near me, a stalwart fellow, with handsome bronzed features and a pair of blue eyes as frank and clear as a child's.

By the light of the lantern swinging above his head I saw that his face was overspread with a look of melancholy quite out of keeping with the *rôle* of jolly Jack Tar that belonged to him, and it was not the first time I had noticed this expression on honest Tom's countenance. It may have been that, coupled with other unusual characteristics, which from the first day had attracted me to the fellow; whatever it was, I had found pleasure in studying this sturdy type of man, and had enjoyed many a quiet chat with him during the long voyage.

"A fine night, Tom," I began by way of opening conversation.

"Ay, sir, a fine night!" answered Tom in his deep tones, saluting me respectfully.

"It isn't often that you make a better trip than this, is it, Tom?"

"Well, no, sir. But we ain't there yit," he answered, significantly.

"You are familiar with these waters, I presume?"

"Well, sir, tol'able familiar. This makes my eleventh trip, I'm 'restless an' oneasy on shore, sir; all sailors is that, but 'pears to me, I'm a little more restless an' oneasy than most of 'em. Mebbe," he went on, his gruff voice softening a little, "mebbe, it's all along o' my not havin' any folks on shore belongin' to me. The ship is all the home I've had this many a year, sir. There was a time when it might a-been different, if so be—" At that moment some one hastily ascended the stairs leading from the cabin, and called my name. "It's the doctor, sir; Dr. Claas," said Tom, touching his cap, and turning away.

Dr. Claas, the ship's physician, hurriedly approached the place where I was reclining.

"Pardon me, sir," he said, extending his hand as I rose to meet him, and giving mine a hearty pressure, "but I believe you are a practising physician?"

As the doctor, a singularly grave and reticent man, had until now shown no desire to extend our acquaintance, I was unprepared for the cordiality of his greeting, but I answered at once in the affirmative.

"Then you are the only medical man besides myself on board, and I beg of you to consult with me in a most interesting case. I am not mistaken—you will do me this favour?"

As a young and comparatively inexperienced practitioner, I could not but feel flattered by the doctor's manner, and answered without hesitation:

"Certainly, with the greatest pleasure."

"Then, come, I beg," he earnestly said. "There is no time to lose."

As I passed Tom to follow Dr. Claas, I noticed that he was leaning forward, as if listening to what we had been saying, and I fancied that I heard him mutter some indistinct words as he resumed his position.

A moment later I stood with my colleague by the side of the sick child. He no longer moaned, but lay motionless and almost pulseless, upon his pillow. The mother sat by him, her dark hair falling loosely, her small hands lying listlessly in her lap, her face pale and tense with unutterable grief and pain. Physician though I was, and already inured to the sight of human suffering, I could not meet the look that was turned upon us as we entered.

On examination of the little sufferer I agreed perfectly with Dr. Claas in his diagnosis of the case; the child, though under the influence of no organic disease, was

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perishing from inanition. His life's small taper was flickering; in a few days at most it would go out in darkness unless—a sudden thought flashed across my mind, sending the blood bounding through my veins. I looked quickly into my colleague's face and met his eyes full upon me; a glance of quick intelligence passed from one to the other, and at the same instant one and the same word passed our lips. That word was—transfusion!

The thought had been simultaneous. To restore the child's almost extinguished vitality, the famishing frame, deprived of nutriment by the incapacity of the organs of digestion and assimilation to do their work, must be supplied with fresh life-material already prepared for assimilation. In other words, the warm, ruddy stream of life must be led direct from the arteries of a living, healthy being into the child's own depleted veins.

Only a physician can comprehend the glow of enthusiastic joy that pervaded our whole beings as this theory, then comparatively new and untried, presented itself before us with all its glorious possibilities.

The grave face of Dr. Claas fairly shone for a moment, then darkened again, and he shook his head gravely.

"A magnificent opportunity!" he said, in a tone of regret—"magnificent! But, unfortunately, impracticable. Being so near the end of our voyage we have not a living animal on board!"

A sharp cry interrupted my answer. In our professional zeal we had forgotten that the mother's ears were drinking in every word that was uttered. In an instant a slender arm, bared to the elbow, was extended towards us.

"I know what you mean," the little woman hurriedly said, her face flushing and paling again, "I have read much about it. I remember that it need not be an animal—a human being will do as well—even better!"

Even Dr. Claas was not proof against this. I saw his eyes grow moist as he took the extended hand gently in both his own. "It cannot be, madam," he said, as if speaking to a little child. "Compose yourself. We will retire and consider other means; something may yet suggest itself."

It was very hard to convince her that not from her fragile, exhausted frame might flow the invigorating stream that should give new life to her dying child. But we left her at last, sitting in listless despair by the little couch, as before, and returned to the deck, where Dr. Claas joined me in a long discussion of the subject that had been under consideration.

Tom, the sailor, was still on duty, pacing the deck at times, or leaning against the foremast, taking no apparent notice of our presence. At a late hour I bade Dr. Claas good-night, and retired to my berth, but not to sleep. The piteous face of that mother as we left her, having given the deathblow to her last hope, was constantly before me; her plaintive voice mingled with the monotonous splashing of the waves.

For what seemed hours I lay listening to every sound, longing for daylight, though it was not yet midnight, but finally eight bells sounded, and steps and voices overhead showed that Tom was being relieved from duty.

A moment later there was a knock at the door of my room, and in response to my astonished "Come in" it was opened, and Tom himself, looking very awkward and uncertain, stood on the threshold.

"Beg pardon, sir," he said, in a husky whisper, fingering his cap like a bashful boy, "beg pardon, but I made sure you wasn't asleep, an' there was somethin' I wanted to ask ye right away, sir, if I may make so bold."

So far from being angry with Tom for his intrusion, I was glad of any interruption to my painful thoughts, and bade him enter and close the door.

"And now what is it, Tom?" I said, when he had done so.

"I wouldn't have ye think, sir, that I *meant* to listen to your conversation with the doctor," he began, after much preliminary shuffling and clearing of his voice, "but bein' where I was, some words came to my hearin', sir, an' after that I *couldn't* but lis'en, feeling an interest in the little chap myself. An' from what I heard I gathered as how there was somethin' that 'ould save his life, sir, if it could be had, an' because it *couldn't* be had, sir, the poor little chap must die."

Tom made a little halt here, and then continued:

"I—I couldn't rightly make out what it was as was wanted an' can't be had."

Tom's gruff voice trembled a good deal as he stumbled through his clumsy speech, and he shifted himself from one foot to the other a good many times.

It was impossible for me to feel either amusement or vexation at what might have seemed to some very like presumption. I did not hesitate to explain to Tom as simply and clearly as possible the theory of transfusion, the obstacles in the way of its application in the present case, and the regret of Dr. Claas and myself at the loss of so fine an opportunity.

Tom listened breathlessly, leaning forward, his eyes fixed upon me, his lips moving in unconscious imitation of my own. When I had finished, he straightened himself, putting one hand to his curly head with a perplexed air.

"Ay, ay!" he slowly said; "that was it! I wasn't sure as I got it right end up, sir, but that was it! Ye see it has a powerful strange sound to a man like me; but jest let me once git my bearin's, sir, so't I don't run agin no sunken rocks nor sandbanks, an' I'm all right, sir. You say that the blood of a livin', breathin' healthy animal, beast or human, pumped, so to speak, into the veins of an ailin' creatur', beast or human, will save life. Wal', sir," and drawing himself up, he bared for my inspection one magnificent muscular arm, freshly tattooed with all a sailor's taste and ingenuity. "Wal', sir, here am I, eight-and-twenty year of age, tough as oak, an' though I say it as shouldn't, mebbe, as sober a man as ever trod deck, an' the little chap yonder is welcome to the last drop o' blood in my veins, so be it might save him to the poor little woman that is breakin' her heart over him, as any man can see."

I sprang from my berth and seized Tom's hard brown hand.

"My brave fellow," I cried, "you will do this for the sake of a child who is nothing to you, and a woman you never saw before and never will see again?"

A strange smile came over Tom's face, and his eyes sought the floor.

"I will, sir," he answered, hoarsely, "for the sake of that same woman—as I shall never see again, mos' likely."

In an incredibly short time I stood again with Dr. Claas at the door of the state-room we had left a few hours before in so different a mood. It was opened by the child's mother, who had been prepared for our coming, and welcomed us with eagerness. Already reviving hope had given some brightness and colour to her face.

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"You have found someone who is willing to render this service?" she began, excitedly. "A sailor, you say? Oh, where is he? Let me see him and speak with him. I must thank him for his noble kindness——"

Meantime Tom had remained in shadow, but, as she came forward, looking eagerly about her, he stepped out into the light, and stood awaiting her, cap in hand. She sprang towards him with extended hands. "Oh, you good, brave fellow; God bless you!" she began, fervently. "God must and will bless you for your kindness to a poor despairing mother——"

She stopped abruptly, as if suddenly turned to stone. The full light of the lamp fell over the sailor's athletic figure and pale, agitated face. His eyes were fixed upon her with an inscrutable expression. For some time the two stood gazing at each other in silence, then, with a loud cry, the woman started forward, wavered, and would have fallen but for Tom, who seized her in his mighty arms and laid her on the nearest sofa.

For a moment he stood bending over her, his form perceptibly shaken, his face hidden; then, at a summons from Dr. Claas, with whom the necessity for prompt action superseded all other emotions, he left the unconscious woman in charge of the stewardess, and followed us into the state-room.

A half-hour later the operation had been successfully accomplished.

We found the mother still lying on the sofa where we had left her, but at the sound of our steps she started up wildly expectant.

"Be calm, madam," said Dr. Claas, his very voice and mien expressing the satisfaction he felt, "all has passed off well. Your child is sleeping peacefully, and we have every reason to hope for the best."

"Thank God! Oh, thank God!" said the happy mother, with streaming eyes.

"But the man—the sailor—where is he? I must see him—there is something to be explained," she continued, in deeply agitated tones.

But Tom had slipped silently away, and was not to be found.

"It is better so," said the doctor, returning to the saloon. "You have had enough excitement for to-night."

Then, after administering a sedative, we left the now hopeful woman to return to her child, while we sought such rest as the brief summer night might have yet in store for us.

In the course of the next morning, having made an early call with my colleague upon our little patient with the most gratifying results, I found myself on deck.

Suddenly the dull silence was broken by the sound of excited voices, which I recognised as those of the Captain and Dr. Claas.

"For the last time, sir," the captain was saying in angry tones, "I repeat, that such conduct is entirely unbecom ing, and against my wishes. Yesterday you led one of my men on to an act of romantic foolhardiness, and to-day, without consulting me, you send him down below to his hammock, to recover from the consequences of this eccentric and absurd experiment. Why, sir, you are exceeding your authority. You are encouraging insubordination. Once more, sir, it cannot be allowed!"

"Allow me to say, captain," said Dr. Claas, with great self-control, "that there was no leading on in the matter, whatever. As I call this gentleman to witness (turning towards me) the man having overheard us as we discussed the subject on deck, not dreaming that he would hear, or at least comprehend what we were saying, came forward and offered himself for the experiment—an act which not one man in a hundred would be capable of, sir. To send him aloft to repair a broken yard under a sky like this, after such a loss of blood, would be simply brutal, sir."

The doctor's earnest speech had its effect upon the testy but kind-hearted officer, and after some further efforts on our united parts, the captain returned to the quarter-deck in a somewhat mollified mood.

At the suggestion of Dr. Claas I went below to look after Tom. The brave fellow lay stretched in his hammock in the close, small cabin, in a troubled sleep. The open collar of his blouse exposed to view a throat and chest of statuesque proportions; his curling brown hair was matted over his forehead; his face, haggard beneath its deep bronze hue, wore a look of gentleness and suffering.

The interest I had felt from the start in this fine specimen of Nature's nobleman had mounted to enthusiasm, and I was impatient to know more of the man and of his relations with the woman, seemingly so far removed from his own sphere in life, upon whom his appearance had produced so startling an effect.

Not to disturb the sleeper, I was withdrawing noiselessly, but at the moment Tom stirred and opening his eyes, gazed at me, with a bewildered stare. His glance was uncertain, his lips trembled, as with fever.

"What time is it?" he asked, feebly. "Have I slept long?"

"It is twelve," I answered. "You have slept two hours, and can lie and rest as long as you feel like it. It is the captain's order. How are you feeling?" I added, seating myself on the blue-painted chest that doubtless contained the sailor's worldly possessions.

"Better now," answered Tom; "but a while ago my legs would scarcely bear me, and my head whirled round like a rusty capstan. It is powerful kind o' you, sir, to come an' ask after me. An' how is the little chap gettin' on?" he added, his voice softening suddenly.

"Very well indeed, Tom. I have been with Dr. Claas to see him, and unless we are much mistaken the tide has turned, and the boy will recover. And if he does, Tom, it is to you he owes his life."

Words cannot picture the look that transfigured the sailor's sun-bronzed countenance—a look of deep and perfect content. He kept his eyes on the ceiling over his head for some time, his lips smiling like a child's.

"Good!" I heard him whisper. "That does me good to hear. The boy will live, an' she will be happy. Good!"

But after a while he turned to me again.

"Mebbe," he began, doubtfully—"mebbe you might a-guessed, from what you saw, that the little chap's mother an' me wasn't no strangers, sir; an' if ye don't mind lis'enin', I'd like to tell ye how things is, an' was, sir; for I wouldn't have ye go to think harm of *her*, not knowing."

I assured Tom that I was only too glad to listen to his story if it would not fatigue him too much in the telling.

"No, sir," he said; "it'll be a powerful relief to git it off my mind, along of her that might be misjudged, if ye didn't know the true facts. No, sir; Nell—that's her—Nell an' me is no strangers. We was born an' brought up in a little village ye likely never heard of, away down on the coast. Ay, different as things is now; our folks was neighbours, an' Nell an' me was playmates an' friends as long ago as I can remember, though her folks was better off than mine, an' Nell had a better chance at books an' the like.

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"So when I grow up an' began to follow the sea like my father an' gran'father afore me, it come about quite natural that I should begin to look on Nell as my sweetheart, an' she on me. Every time I got home from a voyage I found her prettier an' sweeter, an' fonder of me—leastways, I thought so then.

"She was a beauty in them days, sir, as ye can judge for yourself now, though she's changed powerful, poor girl! But in them times she led the fleet, sir. The city folks that come down to the coast o' summers took a deal o' notice of Nell—she was that proud an' sperrited, an' could hold her own with the best, her father bein' a retired cap'n as had made his pile, but warn't in no way stuck up, an' favoured me, poor sailor though I was.

"Well, sir, there come a time when I started off on a three years' cruise. It was pretty tough, that was, but we was to be married when it was over, an' with that look ahead, sir, bein' young an' ambitious, the time passed pretty quick. It's a rough life, a sailor's, as every man knows, an' I'm free to own as I've been a bit wild in my time, sir, but as I'm a livin' man to-day, I was true to Nell all through that three years' cruise. Whenever we made port, instead o' foolin' away my money with the rest, I was hangin' round shops an' bazaars, a-pickin' up pretty things for Nell—silk handkerchiefs, an' carved boxes an' fans, an' all kinds o' furrin' notions that women love.

"Nell never got to see 'em sir; they're stowed away in that there blue chest as you're a-settin' on this minute; for, as mebbe you've guessed by this time, when we made port I found Nell married an' gone—ay, sir, married to a fine gentleman from the city, an' gone to live amongst his kind of folks. Ay," he added, with a husky laugh, "if I'd got home a month sooner I might a-danced at her weddin'.

"An' I forgot to mention that the old man was dead, or mebbe it mightn't 'a' happened—though I don't know as it would have made any odds. No, sir, I never laid no blame on to *her*, though I own as it hit me hard, an' sent me a-careerin' over the world like a ship that's lost rudder an' compass.

"It's a-goin' on seven years since it happened, sir, an' I'd begun to git in a way used to it, though it sorter took me afresh when the ship was homeward bound, an' I remembered as no one was a-waitin' an' a-watchin' for *me*, my folks bein' dead and gone long ago, when there was she a-comin' on board this here ship, a lone woman at her age—she's only twenty-six, sir—an' lookin' so peaked, an' a-holdin' on for dear life to that there little youngster as a stout breeze might blow away! An' now you know how it is; an' why I was willin' to do what I've done; not for a strange woman (though I ain't sure as I wouldn't a-done the same), but for the little woman that was to a-been my wife. The little woman I ain't never forgot, an' never shall forget, though she never can be aught to a rough sailor like me."

"But she asked for you, Tom, this morning. She wishes to see you," I said.

Tom laid his bandaged arm across his face, but his deepening colour did not escape me, and I saw how the burly frame was shaken with sudden emotion.

"No, sir," he said, huskily, after some moments. "No, sir; it's better not. Tell her I say it's better not. Tell her she's free an' welcome to all I done, an' if 'twas to do over again, she'd be free an' welcome to the last drop o' my heart's blood, so be the little chap was flourishing an' she was happy. An' tell her," he continued, softly, "if so be as she should say anything to you about what's past an' gone, that I ain't never harboured nothin' agin her, first or last, an' wishes her well an' happy wherever she may be."

In my interest in Tom's narration I had not observed the gradual darkening of the cabin, but now all motion seemed suddenly and strangely suspended.

It needed not Tom's sudden, excited cry to tell me the meaning of this. I knew intuitively that we were at the mercy of a hurricane.

At the first sound Tom had leaped from his hammock, and flung open the door. Above the roar of the elements could be heard a confusion of voices, a hurried rush of feet, then clear and distinct came the captain's voice, shouting through his trumpet:

"*All hands on deck.*"

Instantly Tom sprang towards the stairs, turning only to say as I would have followed him:

"No passengers allowed on deck! Take care of yourself, and keep cool, sir: Ay, ay, sir!" he shouted back, as the trumpet-call sounded again.

I tried to detain him; to speak some words of caution and protest. My voice was drowned by the storm, and Tom shook off my hand with a laugh. With one spring he mounted the stairs and lifted the hatchway.

Stumbling and pitching along the narrow, dark gangway, I made my way to the state-room of our little patient, and with the aid of cushions and pillows made the position of mother and child as secure as possible; then I turned my attention to the women and children in the saloon.

Towards sunset the hurricane seemed to have expended it power, and though the ship continued to pitch frightfully, the passengers dragged themselves to their respective state-rooms, myself among the rest; and against my will, for I meant to seize the first possibility of reaching the deck, I sank, from sheer exhaustion, into a sleep, which lasted until daybreak. As soon as I was conscious I left my room and hastened on deck.

Almost the first person I saw was Dr. Claas, who was coming in search of me.

At sight of his face a sharp pang went through me.

"We are safe, yes," he said, seizing my hand; "but the storm had its victim."

"Tom?" I barely whispered.

"Yes, Tom!"

It seems that at the very height of the storm one of the sails became loose from its fastenings, and, sweeping the deck, caused the ship to careen dangerously to leeward. The captain called for volunteers to climb the topmost and cut away the sail. It was a perilous undertaking in such a wind. Of all the crew only one man came forward. It was Tom. Firm and sure he made the ascent, and cut away the ropes; the sail flew swiftly off over the frothing sea, and the ship righted herself at once.

Hand over hand, swinging himself gallantly from yard to yard, the brave fellow descended; but when half-way down he was seen to miss his grasp, to clutch at the ropes, to fall heavily to the deck.

* * * * * * * * *

The sun was setting when, wrapped in the ship's flag, a tribute rendered to his heroic worth and splendid seamanship, the dead sailor was consigned to his unmarked grave.

In low tones the captain read the burial service; for a moment each head was bent in silent prayer; then, at a signal, there was a swift gliding of ropes, a splash, and the laughing waves closed above all that was mortal of the humble hero of this simple tale.

N. N.

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By JOAN BARRETT.

"I HOPE you will be back in time to give the dear children their tea," said Lady Sarah Chesney to her young governess, Jessica Dene. "And do pray be careful about making inquiries as to the nature of your friend's illness before you enter her room. With so many little ones in the house we dare not risk their taking any ailment."

Jessica's beautiful little face flushed crimson. She bent her head almost confusedly over the long suède glove which she was pulling upon her hand. Lady Sarah looked at the gloves in disapproval.

"The extravagant girl must spend quite half of her salary for gloves," she thought, with a tightening of her thin lips. "That pair must have cost at least six shillings. *I* have to be content with cheap ones!"

Lady Sarah's grim regard wandered over Jessica's grey dust-cloak and broad sun hat. She asked herself what it was in Miss Dene's appearance that seemed so holiday-like that morning. The grey dust cloak was far from new, and had been worn by Jessica for two summers, and the straw hat was merely a cheap affair of a few shillings, scarlet poppies, grey tulle and all included.

"It must be those gloves," said Lady Sarah, mentally. "Of course you will not think of seeing your friend if you hear that she is suffering from any infectious malady," she said aloud to Jessica. "You will come home at once."

"Yes," Jessica replied in a low tone.

"And when you pass by old Mrs. Gregg's," continued Lady Sarah, "pray make her understand that soup is only given away *once* a week at the Vicarage, and not every day, as she seems to expect. I wish you to mention at the same time that I desire her grandson to come round to the servants' entrance. I found him waiting at the hall door with a great water-jug only yesterday. Please tell Mrs. Gregg that for the future she must send a basin only for the soup." Lady Sarah paused a moment, half closing her eyes in reflection.

"Oh, yes, and don't forget to leave the list at the stores and to call at the dyer's about Mary's dress. It will not take you long," she added, suddenly aware of a troubled expression in Jessica's eyes. "And walking about in the open air will be far better for you than remaining in the close atmosphere of a sick-room. By the way, what is your friend's name?"

The colour died in Jessica's cheeks. She tugged nervously at her glove.

"Jones," she answered, hesitatingly, and after a second of silence, "Jane Jones—yes—Jane Jones."

"Jane Jones," repeated Lady Sarah, as though she were fixing the name in her memory. "How can you wear that cloak upon such a hot day?" she asked, abruptly; "you will be stifled."

Jessica glanced apprehensively at her cloak. It was buttoned from head to foot, yet she drew its folds closer around her figure.

"The—the—carriages are so—so—dirty," she faltered.

Lady Sarah's stern features relaxed.

"So they are," she said, in a kinder tone. "You are going third-class?"

"Yes, yes."

In her perturbation, Jessica pulled more roughly at the glove. The kid, resenting the ill-treatment, split in the palm. Jessica looked at it and laughed stupidly.

"I must get another pair," she murmured, moving hastily towards the door.

"What a sad pity!" Lady Sarah exclaimed, thinking of the glove, and almost as much vexed in her frugal soul as though it were her own. "Perhaps you could draw it neatly together with silk."

"I will try. Have you any other commission?"

"The Vicar has a letter for you to post. You will find it in his study. Oh, bring back a small jar of marmalade from the stores. It is not heavy, and you can carry it beneath your cloak. I promised the dear children that you should bring them something from Walton."

"Very well. Good-bye, Lady Sarah."

Lady Sarah watched Jessica from the room.

"There really is something odd about the girl this morning," she said to herself. "She looks as though she were going on a visit of pleasure instead of answering a call to a sick-bedside."

The Rev. Hugh Chesney was composing his weekly sermon when Jessica entered the study. He raised his thin, careworn face from the partly-covered sheet of ruled paper, and pushed his spectacles higher upon his nose, as Jessica came to his side.

"Going to Walton to see your sick friend?" he asked, kindly. "I trust you will find her in better health, Miss Dene—do you mind waiting a moment—I've a few leaflets somewhere which I think your friend may find both profitable and entertaining to read." He began to turn over a pile of tracts as he spoke. "'Advice to a Drunkard.' Hum, that will hardly do! 'Jane Blair, or the Converted Washerwoman,' that is not quite suitable perhaps; but these small books your friend cannot fail to derive instruction from. She need not return them."

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Jessica took the flat parcel of tracts, with a faint smile dawning round her pretty lips.

"Thank you, Mr. Chesney," she said, and there was a suspicious tremble in her voice.

The Vicar looked after Jessica as she went from the room. Like his wife, he was puzzled at the indefinable change in her appearance.

"She grows prettier and prettier every day," he murmured to himself, with a shake of his head. "Poor child!"

In the hall, Jessica paused to cast a glance at herself in a mirror which hung there. She smiled saucily at her reflection.

"I wish I were never coming back again," she declared, as she straightened her hat and arranged the bow at her throat. "If only Jack were rich——"

The sun lay upon the paths of the old-fashioned garden, and from the trim box borders, the ten-weeks stocks, and the jasmine bushes came a sweet, confused odour. Jessica drew in a long, deep breath, looking back at the red brick house and the tangled roses that covered the porch.

"Hateful old prison!" she said.

Her step was hurried as she passed down the straggling village street. The women standing in little knots gossiping at their doors, nodded to her. Jessica barely noticed them, so great was her hurry.

Old Mrs. Gregg, from her window, made frantic signs to the clergyman's governess to enter her house. Jessica quickened her pace at this moment.

"I can't stop! I can't stop!" she cried aloud; but Mrs. Gregg could not hear her, and hobbled to the door to call after her.

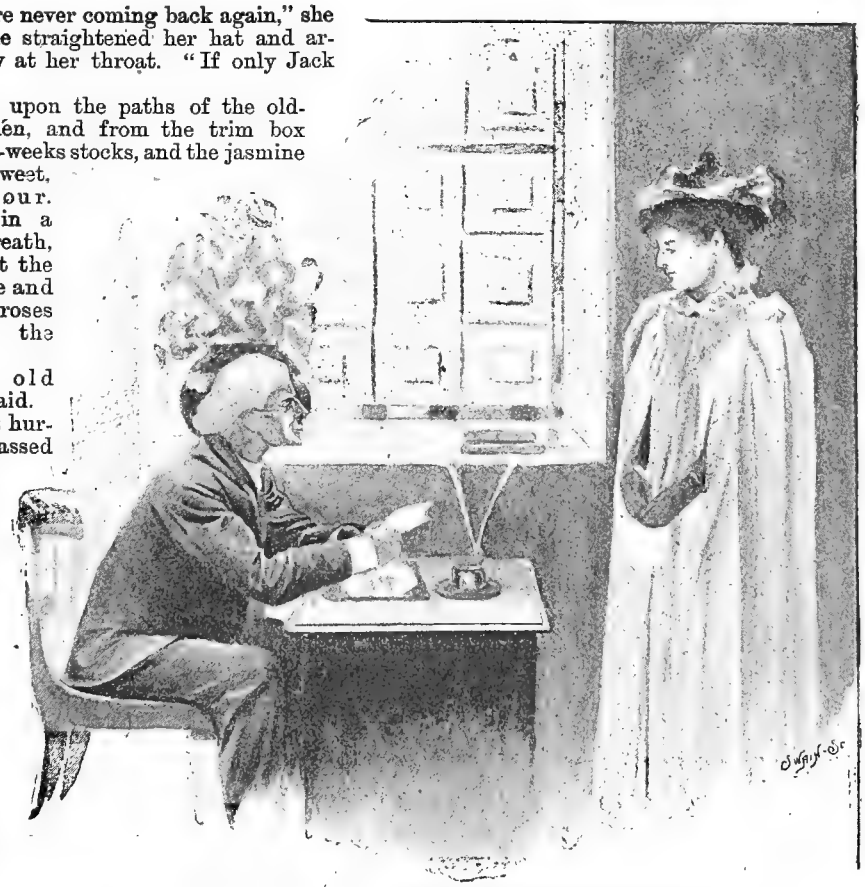
At the sound of that weak, piping voice, a very demon of fear entered Jessica's heart. She could see the steam issuing from the station. The train for Staines was waiting. She dare not lose it. Regardless of Mrs. Gregg's cries, she began to run, and at last she entered the station panting and breathless.

Someone half lifted her into a compartment. A porter rushed up with her ticket, and Jessica took it with trembling fingers. It was most vexing that attention should be directed to her in this manner. Lady Sarah or the Vicar might hear during the day that she had asked for a ticket for Staines. Everything that one did or said was always talked over in the village. What a very tiresome place Chessington was!

She was pushing the ticket into the palm of her glove, when a well-known voice exclaimed, in a half-amused, half-vexed tone:

"After my lifting you into the carriage, too! It is really unkind of you, Miss Dene, to snub me in this manner."

Jessica raised her eyes in startled surprise. She had been too much flurried to observe the other occupant of the compartment; indeed, she was hardly aware that she was not alone. She looked at the man facing her with a vivid blush crimsoning her cheeks, and her heart began to flutter in a most unreasonable way.



The Rev. Hugh Chesney was composing his weekly sermon.

"Oh, Doctor Mordaunt," she faltered, with sweet shyness in her voice, "I—I—am so sorry!"

"If you are really and truly penitent I must forgive you," Doctor Mordaunt said, holding out his hand. "May I ask where you are going?"

Jessica's under lip began to tremble.

"Lady Sarah has very kindly given me permission to spend the day with a—a—friend — Jane Jones," she answered, hurriedly.

"I thought you had no friends in the neighbourhood."

"Jane Jones is my only friend—and she does not live here—she is only visiting," explained Jessica, becoming more and more confused and rosy.

"Miss Jones is an old lady, I suppose?"

Jessica shook her head, and attempted to withdraw her hand from the doctor's clasp. He seemed to have forgotten that he was still retaining it. Her cloak had become unfastened in her run to the station, and a loose, white flannel blouse was visible beneath, quite a nautical looking garment.

"This is the first occasion that I have had the pleasure of meeting you alone outside the Vicarage," said Doctor Mordaunt, suddenly. "I wonder if you know how happy

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I feel at having you all to myself, even for so short a time."

Jessica's eyelids dropped. She evaded the doctor's glance.

"I wish you felt as pleased as I do. I wish——" he paused, for Jessica had wrenched her hand almost roughly away, and, with the abrupt movement, the little packet of leaflets had fallen to the ground. Each bent for them. A tress of Jessica's hair brushed the doctor's cheek. He looked up, and met her eyes fully. The packet fell once more to the floor, as Doctor Mordaunt took the girl's hands.

"Jessica!" he exclaimed. She interrupted him with a nervous laugh.

"Oh, if you please, do give me Jane Jones's tracts," she said. "The Vicar asked me to carry them to her. There is room for a lot of improvement in Jane. That is why I am taking them to him—to her, I mean."

"Never mind those things. I want to tell you——"

"But I *do* mind!" she cried. "Jane will be so disappointed—and——"

"She will get over her disappointment. You know what I am trying to say to you—don't make it more difficult for me——"

"If it is difficult at all, please don't bother about saying it," she advised, foolishly. "I—I—wouldn't."

"But I must tell you. I have been wanting to tell you for many months," said Doctor Mordaunt, in an earnest voice. "It ought not to be hard to say, 'I love you.' I want you to understand that I love you very dearly, Jessica."

The train stopped. A porter ran past the window, shouting, "Staines!"

Jessica was dimly aware that Doctor Mordaunt had descended and was holding out both hands inviting her to alight. In her confused trouble she hesitated. She had caught sight of a handsome young man in flannels, who was pushing his way roughly among the people, as he peered anxiously into the various carriages.

Standing in her dressing-gown before a looking-glass.

"There is Jane Jones!" exclaimed Jessica, abruptly and joyously.

She was sorry the next moment, for Doctor Mordaunt, after glancing at the young man in amazement, had drawn back with cold sternness written in every line of his face.

Jane Jones heard Jessica's cry. He elbowed the doctor aside with unceremonious brusqueness, placed his foot upon the step, and seizing Jessica by the waist lifted her bodily to the ground.

"Your train's a good ten minutes late," said he. "Come on. I've had the boat waiting for the past hour."

She half raised her face as though she expected him to kiss her. He drew back with a laughing, protesting gesture.

"For shame, Jess, and before all the people too! You really make me blush, my dear. Now, don't begin to cry; you shall hug me to your heart's content in the boat when the camera fiend is not in sight."

Jessica cast a troubled glance at Doctor Mordaunt. He had only waited for that. Slightly raising his hat, he turned away, but not before Jessica had noticed the icy contempt of his regard.

"Oh, Jack!" she cried, and half turned as though to follow the doctor's retreating figure.

Jane Jones caught her by the arm, and dragged her from the station.

"We can't afford to lose a minute, old girl," said he. "Awfully sorry, but you must put off making eyes at dignified-looking old swells until I've left you. You'll have heaps of time——"

"Old swell!" cried Jessica, wrathfully. "He's not at all old! He is only thirty-eight!"

"I did not remark that he was growing bald, sweetest," said Jane Jones, in a soothing tone.

* * * * *

How it came about no one could tell, but about a week after Jessica's visit to Staines, she sickened with typhoid fever.

Lady Sarah, well versed in the symptoms of most maladies, was the first person at the Vicarage to detect that a serious illness lurked in the little governess's heavy eyelids and flushed cheeks. Despite the Vicar's remonstrance, she sent Jessica away to an old farmhouse, many miles from the Vicarage.

"One cannot be too careful," she said to the Vicar, "and we have ourselves and the dear children to think of before our governess. Every care will be taken of her, and Doctor Mordaunt is sure to bring her safely through."

The Vicar rubbed his thin cheeks. He was filled with pity for poor, pretty Jessica.

"I begged her to be careful in visiting her sick friend, Jane Jones," continued Lady Sarah. "She could not have carried out my instructions. Without a doubt, she has caught Jane Jones's malady, and we shall be extremely fortunate if we escape ourselves."

But no other inmate of the Vicarage became ill, and while Jessica lay fighting for life in the old-fashioned farm bedroom, the Vicar's babies were racing about in the Vicarage paddock, lusty and healthy, rejoicing in their absolute freedom from the school-room and lessons. Doctor Mordaunt fought hard for Jessica's life. The grey hairs grew thicker among the brown ones that covered his head, and a tinge of the same colour appeared in his moustache.

Once when she lay feeble, but conscious, in the white dimity-hung bed, he became aware of the wistful expression in her sunken eyes. His thoughts flew at once to

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the young man in flannels, whom she had been so anxious to kiss.

"Do you want to see anyone?" he asked, gently, as he bent over her.

She shook her head, and it seemed to him that the sadness deepened in her wasted face.

"Are you quite sure? I could so easily bring anyone to you if you wished."

"I have no one to visit me, except Lady Sarah and the children," Jessica answered, in weak tones. "I don't want to see them—just yet."

Doctor Mordaunt was puzzled. Had the puppy in flannels only amused himself with Jessica?

One day when she was stronger he entered the room, and found her standing in her dressing-gown before a looking-glass. She was examining her pinched features with a self-pitying, wistful air, that amused even while it saddened him.

"Come, come," he said; "this will never do. You must not over-tax your strength, you know. Let me help you back to the sofa."

Doctor Mordaunt had never studied the varying expressions of any patient's face as he studied Jessica's. He became aware that she was shy and ill at ease in his presence, she had nothing to say, and appeared painfully embarrassed. "It's that train affair," he thought in vexation. "She can't forget that I once told her I loved her."

When there existed no possible danger of infection the Vicar's eldest boy Bobby came to see Jessica. He brought her a letter with a foreign postmark upon it. Doctor Mordaunt was in the room. He heard the low, glad cry of joy she gave, and saw the happy colour that crept into her cheeks.

"That fellow's letter will do more good than all my tonics," he said, almost jealously to himself.

Bobby had climbed upon the sofa, and was regarding Jessica with an inquisitive look in his round, ruddy face.

"I say," he said, "you have got thin, Miss Dene. Didn't they give you lots of jellies and custards and things?"

Jessica nodded as she fingered her letter.

"Mother said you were costing a lot of money. I wish I'd been ill, too. We only get sago and babies' puddings up in the nursery. Mother said you would die. We were all going to your funeral; and Milly was going to give all the flowers from her own syringa bush. She made a lovely wire cross, and when mother told us that Doctor Mordaunt had saved your life Milly got awfully wild. She and Dolly had been playing at your funeral for ever so long. I say, are you really devoted to Miss Dene, Doctor Mordaunt? Mother said you were. She said that a bat could see it! but bats are blind, aren't they?"

Doctor Mordaunt refused to meet Jessica's eyes.

"Of course I am devoted—to all my patients, Bobby."

"I say, did Jane Jones die?" asked Bobby, with startling abruptness.

"Jane Jones!" repeated Jessica.

"Yes, your friend at Walton who was ill, you know."

Jessica began to laugh hysterically.

"No, no—he didn't die."

"*He?* Jane Jones is a *she*," said Bobby, contemptuously.

Jessica laughed again. She could not control her merriment. But it ceased suddenly when she met Doctor Mordaunt's regard. The stern coldness of his face forced her to remember that he knew of the deception which she had played upon Lady Sarah—knew it, and despised her. Oh, she was sure of it!

"I'm tired, Bobby," she said. "Thank Milly for wanting to give me the flowers, and tell her that her cross may come in for me yet."

When Bobby had gone, and Dr. Mordaunt was collecting his hat, stick, and gloves, Jessica sat upright upon the sofa.

"Please don't look so angry," she entreated, in a very small voice. "I've been wanting to explain to you about Jane Jones for ever such a long time. Oh, if you frown like that I shall never find the courage to tell you."

"I am not interested in Jane Jones, Miss Dene."

"But you are interested in me," said Jessica, bravely, "and so you must be in Jane Jones. I am very fond of him——"

"I am quite aware of that."

"I am more fond of Jane Jones than of anyone else in the world—I mean I *used* to be more fond of him at one time, you know, and he's a sailor, poor boy, and when he wrote to me and asked me to spend just one day with him before he sailed for France, I—I—went, and I told Lady Sarah a fib about it, but she doesn't matter, it is you," said Jessica, a little wildly, and passing her hot hands over her eyes. "I can't bear that you should think me wicked just because I told a story in order to get away. I had asked once before to see him, and she had refused; she said that she could not have my family coming to the——"

"*Your family!* Who *is* Jane Jones?"

"Who!" Jessica repeated. "She is my brother Jack—who did you think she was?"

Doctor Mordaunt was kneeling by the sofa before Jessica quite knew how it came about. I am afraid that he had kissed her, too.

"Oh, Jessica!" he said. "I have been so jealous."

"And I've been so miserable," whispered she. "You used to scold me for not getting strong. I felt that I could never get quite well while I feared that you despised me."

"I never despised you, dearest. I was jealous. I thought that Jane Jones was your lover."

"My lover! Didn't you see that he wouldn't let me kiss him at the station, though he is very fond of me, and spends a lot of money, poor boy, in buying me gloves and things. You ought to have known by the way I wanted to kiss him that he was my brother. Any woman would have guessed our relationship at once."

"But I'm only a poor foolish man, sweetheart! I was actually stupid enough to believe that you didn't care a pin about me, and that I had been an exceptionally conceited individual ever to dream of making you my wife."

"And don't you think that you are conceited now, sir?"

"Do you?"

Jessica gave a low happy laugh.

"Oh, I only know that I'm very happy," she said. "I do think that you're quite the cleverest and the nicest doctor in existence——"

"Only the cleverest and the nicest doctor, Jessica? Nothing more?"

"Why, you vain old thing, what do you want me to say?" she asked. "Would you feel a little more satisfied if I just happened to observe in a casual kind of way that—that you are the very dearest person in the world?"

"Dearer even than Jane Jones?"

She hesitated a moment before answering, but it was only to tease him.

"Lots dearer," she answered. "Poor Jane Jones!"

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YOUNG DR. JARVIS

HE sat alone in his office, reading, perhaps for the twentieth time, the note on the desk before him. The afternoon sunshine touched with pale radiance the familiar objects in the little room. In a faint, flickering fashion it illuminated the shelves of books, the dusty cases of specimens, the stiff row of pictures that adorned the walls, the ragged rug, the worn oil-cloth carpet; but it seemed to linger on the solitary figure in the office chair.

It revealed a sensitive, restless face, with signs of great weakness, great passion, and great tenderness; such a face as men like and women love. It was dark with pain and anger now, for the note had roused a host of sleeping memories. The air seemed full of odour, the remembered odour of hyacinths; and in every shadowy corner Jarvis could see the insolent, smiling face of the woman who had written it.

He crushed the perfumed paper in his hand, though it was only a kind invitation to the poor, struggling country doctor to take charge of a good case, consult with a famous surgeon, and cure—if he could—a sick man. It read simply enough:

Dear Dr. Jarvis,—Mamma wishes me to ask you to come up to-day to see Mr. Morton, who is very ill, and to meet Dr. Linyard, the specialist from the city. We fear an operation is unavoidable, and desire the benefit of your skill.—Sincerely yours, Estelle Morris.

Jarvis had many other notes with that signature hidden away in his private drawer. Estelle Morris had never taken the trouble to ask for her letters, when she had sent him his curt dismissal two years ago. How faithfully he had loved and served her, how he had worked and economised, and strained every nerve to hurry through college, that he might begin the life struggle for fame and fortune that should bring him his heart's desire! She had seemed to return all this passionate devotion, and they had been sworn lovers. Would she wait for him? How often she had told him so, the full, white lids drooping over her soft, shining eyes.

Then, three years ago, a sudden change of fortune had come to her mother. They went abroad, and after a few months her letters altered in tone. Finally, there came a short, cool epistle. "She did not love him," she said. "It was wrong to marry without love, and so—good-bye." In silence, in anger, and in bitter despair he had accepted his fate.

Estelle had come back to England, the promise of her girlhood magnificently fulfilled in the beautiful woman who dazzled the quiet old village. She had many courtiers, and she had chosen the richest of them—a man many years older than herself. The engagement had been proclaimed far and wide. All summer long, from his office window, Jarvis had watched her drive by, benignly arrogant and radiantly handsome. A few days ago he had heard that her future husband was seriously ill. To-day this letter had come. Should he go?

He longed with an intense longing, born of his youth and wounded pride, to show her that he was indifferent to her insult, cold to her neglect. If a half-defined instinct warned him that neither his anger nor his contempt might be proof against the deadly power of the old love, he crushed it, as he crushed the letter in his hand. Go he would, and the future might take care of itself.

The first meeting was easy enough. Jarvis' cold politeness was accepted without a trace of embarrassment.

"Oh, Dr. Jarvis," said Estelle, "it is more than kind of you to come. We hear so much of your skill, and we—I am so much distressed about poor Mr. Morton. You will help him, I am sure?"

He bowed in answer. Yes, he would do his best.

He scarcely dared to look into her eyes. Did she love this old man, he wondered? At the thought, a sudden, uncontrollable hate sprang up in his heart. He fought against it desperately. Medically considered, Morton's case was intensely interesting, rousing his professional pride and surgical daring; and he knew the patient to be a gentle, sweet-natured man.

But Jarvis did not tread the downward path unaided. With all her tact and self-composure, it angered Estelle Morris that the old devoted lover, the humble suppliant of past days, should pass her with careless indifference. Without deliberate thought of the mischief she might do, she felt that she must teach him how dangerous it is to forget a woman.

Morning after morning she would meet him, ostensibly to inquire after the sick man, while the tones of her voice were full of an alluring harmony, and her eyes seemed to pray for pardon although her lips were silent. Each day Jarvis quitted the house more hopelessly miserable, more degraded in his own sight, yet eagerly longing for

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the hour of return, the fresh torture of her presence, the misery of her welcoming smile.

"It is all over, Miss Morris, and safely, I trust," said the famous surgeon, as he hurried downstairs. "That young Dr. Jarvis helped me wonderfully. I prophesy that he will make his mark. I am quite content to leave the case in his hands. Unless there is more heart trouble than we think, Mr. Morton will rally, and be a happy man yet," he added with a chivalric bow.

Estelle thanked him profusely, and stood listening in the hall until the sound of his carriage wheels died away. Then she swiftly glided up the long staircase. In a small anteroom, next to the sick chamber, she found the nurse and the doctor.

Jarvis was dropping some liquid into a glass and started at her entrance. In his nervous manner and white face were plainly visible the strain and excitement of the great surgical crisis he had just witnessed. His hand trembled. He was horribly conscious of her presence.

She stood by the curtained door, her slender figure outlined against the sombre velvet.

"Dr. Linyard tells me," she began, "how much we owe to you and your skill. You are so kind"—her voice grew low—"so generous."

The doctor's hand grew more unsteady. "I will bring this in presently," he said, turning to the nurse.

The woman softly slipped away, and the two faced each other. White and haggard, Jarvis gazed at Estelle. Every fibre of his body seemed to thrill under the look she returned to his.

"Harry," she said, "for the sake of old times, will you forgive me? I know now how badly I treated you, but girls are fools, and——"

He sprang from his chair, the tightly tensioned cord of self-restraint snapping as she spoke.

"What do you mean?" he asked, coming closer to Estelle.

"I only want to be friends once more," she murmured.

But her white fingers had pulled the flood gates too far apart. Jarvis caught her in his arms and clasped her almost savagely. She pushed him aside angrily; yet she listened to his pleading.

"Do you care for this old man? Is the old love dead? Sweetheart, listen to me," he said, passionately.

"How can I listen to you?" she answered, all her diplomacy on guard again. "I have promised to marry Mr. Morton." With a slightly melodramatic sigh she went on, "I am bound by circumstances, but, Harry, I cannot bear to have you hate me. Indeed, it breaks my heart. You will forgive me?"

She paused, for some subtle danger threatened in his face; and turning, she vanished from the room. A few minutes later, as she stood before her long mirror, carefully twisting her heavy coils of chestnut hair, she smiled exultantly at the face in the glass.

Meanwhile, Jarvis sat stiff and silent, mechanically dropping the medicine he was preparing into the glass before him. It was a powerful anodyne; and as Jarvis held the bottle a sudden deadly inspiration seized him. She had promised to marry the old man. If he were dead——

Drop by drop the liquid fell into the glass. Now, the dose was large enough for a healthy organism; now it had passed the limit; now—Jarvis stopped. The nurse stood by the door.

"He is sleeping, doctor," and she took the glass from him. "I am to give him this as you directed, when he wakes, the first dose?"

He did not look at her face. "Yes," he said, and left the room.

In the street outside he met a boy, breathless and excited.

"Doctor," the lad called, "come quickly! There's been a big accident down at the mill. They think Jim Corrigan is killed."

Jarvis hurried away, and in fifteen minutes was fighting for the second time that day the strange, cold mystery of death. There was little time for thought now. On the floor of the mill, surrounded by weeping women, and rough, yet sympathetic men, he exerted his skill, and struggled desperately to save the life of the young Irishman. After some hours of hard work he was again successful, and finally helped to carry the patient to his own house. It was late when Jarvis entered his study and saw the supper his sister had prepared waiting for him on the little table. Worn with excitement, cold, hungry, and exhausted, he ate voraciously, and soon sank into a heavy sleep.

A little after midnight he awoke with a start. The fire was low, the room chilly, and his madness was past. An unspeakable horror came upon him as he remembered his day's work. By this time Morton must be dead. He paced the room in agony, but there was no woman's face to charm and lure him now; only the cold air, the silence, the darkness, which seemed to wrap him in on every side. Surely it must be a dream, this hideous memory of a trust betrayed.

He wondered why they did not come hurrying after him to call him to look at the dead. He strained his ears to listen, expectant, yet alarmed at every distant sound. He could see Morton's face, as he knew it must look, cold and white! Even when he tried to think of Estelle the dead face rose menacingly before him, blotting out every other thought.

Jarvis was the descendant of an honourable race. His nature, naturally weak and sensitive, had been strengthened by an old-fashioned, provincial education, and a simple country life. As the temptation died away, conscience asserted its power, and remorse and horror overcame him. Was there any escape? Yes, one, cowardly as it was, and he slowly moved towards the box where his pistols were. Then he started with a cry, for the door opened and his sister came in. He knew her husband was away, and wondered if her baby was ill, for she held it in her arms.

"You poor boy! How worn and miserable you look, and what a day you have had of it!" she said. "You came in so late, your supper must have been stone cold. I have been upstairs, hearing you tramp up and down here, until I decided to come down and drive you to bed; and baby, little rascal, would come too."

Jarvis watched them stolidly—the mother's pure and gentle face and white, caressing hands, the baby's rosy cheeks and darkly sparkling eyes. This was his only sister. She loved and honoured him. Suppose she knew!

"How is Mr. Morton?" she asked, suddenly.

"Dead by this time," he answered, harshly.

She played with the baby's curls and said slowly, "I am sorry. You and the surgeon have worked so hard; but after all he has been spared much unhappiness, for," she went on hesitatingly, "Estelle Morris cannot help it, perhaps, but she is a heartless girl. I was thankful enough two years ago when—forgive me, Harry, is it possible you love her still?"

"Love? If you call it that," Jarvis answered, wildly. "For her sake I have done murder—murder, do you

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hear? Do not look at me so. Take the child away. Go, go!"

She stared at him, unbelief and horror mingled in her gaze.

"Murder? Impossible!"

"It is true," he went on ruthlessly, but with a sense of grim relief. "After the operation this afternoon, Linyard left. Morton showed signs of fever. I gave him aconite. I gave enough to kill three ordinary men. There's no doubt about it; he's dead by this time."

Helen gave a low cry, and seemed to shrink and grow older before his eyes. There was a long silence. The baby played with the ribbons of her gown, and Jarvis realised that his cup of punishment was full. He knew he had slain the future happiness of this tender, loving woman in confessing a crime which he need never have revealed.

His sister stirred at last, a momentary gleam of anger flashing in her eyes. "She tempted you—I know it," she cried; then her head drooped, and with a flood of tears she crept out of the room. Again Jarvis was alone.

As he expected, the summons came in the early dawn. He heard the wheels of the carriage outside, and opened the door himself to the sleepy servant who stumbled up the steps.

"We want you to come up to the house, sir. Mr. Morton is dead."

"Yes," said Jarvis. "When?"

"Last night, sir. I was coming after you, but I heard you were gone to the mill, and Mrs. Morris said wait till morning."

Jarvis led the way out, and they drove through the sleeping town. He, too, was as one dead, for his youth, his ambition, his desire for life, and the mad love that had caused his ruin—all these were gone from him for ever. This, then, was to be his punishment—this misery of hopeless remorse; yet, as he shuddered before the thought of the future, he acknowledged the eternal justice of God.

They reached the house at last. With a supreme effort of will Jarvis entered the dark hall. At the top of the stairs the nurse met him. She greeted him nervously. "Oh, doctor, after all your trouble, to think he should die this way—so soon, too!"

"When?" said Jarvis.

"Last night, about seven o'clock, and—I must tell you, doctor, for I have rather worried over it. He was sleeping so nicely, I did not disturb him at first; and by accident—I never did such a thing before—I upset one of the medicines you left—the fever medicine. We were just going to send for you when he gave a sigh, and all in an instant he was dead. Perhaps if I had given him the medicine——"

She paused in surprise, for the doctor leant forward, and took her hand suddenly in his.

"I think," he said, "I think it was the will of God."

M. W.

PRAYING FOR WEALTH

THE conversation was getting intensely interesting in the smoking-room of the Brighton Metropole. The subject under discussion was an uncommon one, dealing as it did, with the efficacy of prayer.

"I remember when I was a boy," said a stout commercial, removing the cigar from his mouth, and staring at the chandelier overhead, "I remember once chasing a butterfly for two miles, over a heath, in order to capture it for my collection. It was a magnificent specimen, perfectly marked, and of more than ordinary size. But, despite my persistent efforts, it eluded my net for nearly an hour, and finally disappeared in some mysterious way altogether.

"I remember throwing myself impetuously on the rugged heather and crying heartily over its loss; but, being then of a rather religious turn of mind, I found solace in a boyish prayer that I might eventually secure it. When I got up, the butterfly was hovering over my head, and the next moment it was safely within the little specimen box I carried."

The speaker looked round upon the silent company, and watched the impression of his story.

"A coincidence; a mere coincidence," said a small, sharp-featured man, sipping his whiskey.

"You are wrong, friend," returned the commercial, stolidly. "I regard it as a most striking illustration of the efficacy of an earnest and heartfelt prayer."

The short silence which followed was broken by a clean-shaven, lean man, who spoke with a strong American accent.

"It may, or it may not interest you, gentlemen, to hear an experience I had some twenty years ago in America, which appears to me to, in a measure, support the theory of my worthy friend here who has just given his experience. Would you like to hear it?"

A murmured acquiescence, and a rustling of chairs, as the company settled down to listen, followed; and the American began:

"It was in the winter of '75, and I was carrying mail

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from Gorman's, over to the Brown Bear and Roundout camps, and made the round trip once a week on snow-shoes. When I was at Gorman's, which was four days in the week, I stopped with a Frenchman named Pirot, who worked a mine on the river. We shared a cabin at the back of the hotel, and got along middling well for the first month we were together. In the evening we'd generally turn up at the hotel, and after sitting by the fire with the rest in the saloon for a while, we'd finally drop into old Gorman's private parlour, and listen to Kitty Gorman playing on the organ. I always liked music, but I had no faculty at producing it, so I'd just sit and listen while Kitty would play, and Pirot, who had a good voice, would now and then sing to Kitty's accompaniment.

"This was all well enough at first, but after two or three weeks I found it dull and uninteresting, sitting there by myself on the cold, slippery, black hair-cloth sofa, with never a word nor a chance for one with Kitty, who seemed all taken up with Pirot and the music, and only would speak to me when she wanted another stick on the fire. Then, after a while, I stopped going into the parlour, and would sit in the saloon till bed-time, feeling as cross as I could be to hear Pirot singing and Kitty playing away for dear life to keep up with him on the old organ in the next room.

"Then I grew bitter, because I knew that, while naturally Kitty liked me best of the two, at the same time she was worldly-minded, like her father, old Gorman, and felt Pirot was a better match on account of his river claim, while I wasn't of much account, from a ready-money point of view. Then, of course, I had a falling-out with Pirot about nothing in particular on the surface, as I can recollect of. I did pretty much all the quarrelling, I must admit, for Pirot said nothing but just laughed in a way that made me more angry, and I moved out of the cabin to an old adobe higher up the hill.

"Next day I started off before sunrise on my regular trip with the mail for Brown Bear and Roundout. I always got the best start I could, so as to get up the range while the crust was hard, and before the sun had been up long enough to make it too hot for me, for I wasn't very handy even yet with the long Norwegian snow-shoes. I never stopped on the trip, being always more anxious to get through than to rest; but this particular morning I had started out feeling languid and dispirited, and by the time I'd reached the summit I felt dead beat. My feet were cold and cramped from too tight buckling of the shoes, and altogether I made up my mind to sit down for a minute or two and get pulled together again before I started on.

"There wasn't much wind, and the sun was out warm and comfortable, and the idea of stretching out there on the snow for ten minutes' rest just suited me. I sat down with my back resting against an old dead stump that came up through the snow, unbuckled the shoes, unslung the mail-pouch from my shoulder, and took out the little snack of bread and meat I'd brought along, and which I generally ate on the way, without making any special stop for it.

"While I was eating, looking down the slope I had just climbed up, and thinking what bad luck I'd had during the last few months, my eye caught some lines in the scrap of newspaper I'd wrapped round my lunch, and which was lying out on my leg, under the second piece of bread, just within good reading distance. I don't just recollect now how the words read, but the drift of it was that lots of men failed in getting what they wanted in this world, just because they didn't want it hard enough, and didn't keep asking and praying for it until they got it.

"Those lines, somehow, applied to my case, it seemed to me. I hadn't had much early religious training, and the idea of praying hard for what you wanted and getting it, struck me as something new and simple and very satisfactory. There was no end of things I wanted, and wanted badly, and if they were to be had by just wanting them badly enough, and asking for them hard enough, I was going to get them.

"Then I said to myself, why not start now with a silent prayer? So I set at it. I closed my eyes and squeezed my lids together hard—I was so dead in earnest. It was a terrible, sweeping, vigorous prayer. First, I wanted good luck in a general way, and asked for it hard. Then I got more down to particulars, and asked to be rich and prosperous, and wound up with a sort of incidental suggestion that it would suit me down to the ground to have Pirot fall off his luck and get poor, while I grew rich. All this wasn't right, of course, as I see now. But I wasn't so much praying for bad luck to Pirot for its own sake, as for the effect of it all on my getting on with Kitty Gorman.

"When I prayed for Pirot's downfall, I was so wrought up by the whole business that—just, I suppose, to give things a particular point—I kicked out my right leg so vigorously, and struck the snow-shoe to which I'd buckled the mail-pouch so hard, that, zip-whizz! like a shot it was on its way down the hill. It made a clear shoot for about five hundred feet, every now and then spinning about, when an end would strike a snag, until it brought up short against a ledge that stood out across its track, sending splinters of stone all about when it struck, for with the mail-pouch buckled on to it, it picked up considerable speed, and hit hard. It bounded up and turned clean over and then stopped altogether, held from sliding any further by the croppings.

"Well, while that snowshoe was pirouetting down the slope, I was that surprised and angry that, although I'd just been indulging in prayer, I let loose a line of language which was so strong and pointed that if there had been any feeling to that snowshoe, it would have brought up within fifty feet. I mention this with regret, because I see now that if I hadn't been moved to make those remarks, just fresh on top of the prayer, things would have turned out different; but being young and hot-headed and thoughtless then, of course I didn't look ahead for consequences.

"There was nothing to do but go down to the ledge where the snowshoe lay, pick it up and the mail-pouch, and get on my way again. The ledge was rotten with the weather and pretty well broken up already, and aside from the small pieces just knocked out of it, there had been one chunk loosened up, which had rolled just away from the ledge, and lay with the fresh break turned up to the sun, and dazzling me with its brightness.

"That piece of rock was just crossed all over and through with coarse wire-gold. I stood staring at it a full minute before I could realise that I was looking at rock that would go over a £1,000 to the ton; that I was the discoverer and owner of that ledge, and that finding it just meant to me everything worth having, including, of course, first and foremost, riches and Kitty Gorman.

"While I stood there I recollected, with a start, that riches and prosperity and Kitty Gorman were what I had been praying for hard five minutes before, and here it all was within reach in answer to that prayer

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Naturally I was somewhat excited, but I kept cool enough to put up monuments and a location notice all right, and christened the claim the 'Heavenly Snowshoe,' as being appropriate to the situation.

"You can imagine I wasn't very anxious after this to keep on with the mail to Brown Bear and Roundout. I wanted to get back to Gorman's, and let them know about the discovery. So I climbed up the hill again for the other shoe, knocked off some good specimens to show what I'd found, and was back again at Gorman's a little after sunset.

"When I went down to the hotel after I'd cooked supper and cleaned up at the adobe, I could hear Pirot singing and Kitty playing the accompaniments as usual; but instead of riling me, as it had all along, I just laughed to myself when I thought of the 'Heavenly Snowshoe,' and of how quickly all this would be knocked on the head when Kitty and old Gorman learnt of my good luck. I went into the saloon first, where I could generally count on finding the old man of an evening; but they said he was in the parlour with Pirot and Kitty listening to the music.

"When I went in, after knocking, they all looked surprised, and didn't seem very pleased; but I knew what had come to me, and what was coming to Pirot, and didn't mind, but began and told him what I'd found, and opened up my flour-sack I'd brought my specimens down in, and laid them all out on the table under the light of the hanging lamp, where they showed up richer than any specimens I ever saw. They all got round the table and admired them, and Kitty was very friendly, and old Gorman got very much interested and excited over it all, although he was generally pretty cold-blooded about most things.

"There wasn't any more singing or playing that evening, and pretty quickly Pirot said good-night and left us, not looking cheerful. Old Gorman asked me all kinds of questions about the size and dip of the ledge, and the nature of the croppings, and Kitty sat by the table, and was brighter and chattier than I'd seen her in a month. When I told the old man I'd locate him in with me on the claim he was delighted, and we arranged to meet next morning and talk up the best way of dealing with the property. Then at last we said good-night, and I went up to my adobe feeling very satisfied at the style in which my prayer was working.

"Next day old Gorman and I had our talk out, and it was settled between us that we were to locate extensions of the 'Snowshoe,' start in developing and incorporating the whole business at once, setting aside part of the stock for what old Gorman called a 'working capital,' and, meantime, the old man was to put up for expenses. Things went on almost too smoothly for the next month. The ledge opened up very nicely, Kitty was more friendly every day, and as for Pirot, he never turned up nowadays—anyhow, when I was about.

"Now my folks at home had been writing on an average once every six months for the last five years, urging me to come home and see them before they all died; but I'd never had any means to go, or any way to get any up to now. But when another letter came about this time, still nagging me to come on, I showed it to old Gorman, for he and I had got to be very friendly, and he said I ought to go, and he'd lend me the money to go with, and look after things while I was gone. The old man kept his word; he did look after things, as you'll see.

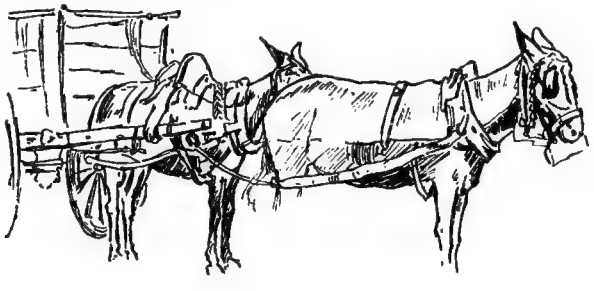
"Well, this was in April. I got back and saw the folks, took a little general *passear* all round, and it was August before I arrived one evening on the stage at Gorman's again. At the first glance, before I got down, I could see there'd been some considerable changes in the hotel since I'd been gone. The main building had been repainted, and there was a complete new outfit of red settees in the front porch. A strange man, with the air of owning the whole plant, came out from the office, and there was no sign of old Gorman or Kitty standing in the front door, as was usual when the stage came in.

"I felt a sinking at the heart at all this, as though something bad was going to happen to me. I wasn't kept long in doubt, though, about the state of things. I hadn't been off the stage five minutes when I learnt it all. Quickly as I'd left, old Gorman sold Pirot all the 'working capital' as a starter. Then between them they worked up a scheme to sell me out on a delinquent assessment. Then they struck an English syndicate and sold out the property at a big figure. Next thing, Kitty became Mrs. Pirot, old Gorman closed the hotel, and the three disappeared for no one knew where.

"Well, I won't dwell on my feelings, or how I expressed them when I heard all this and found it true; but that's neither here nor there. I could see, after I'd cooled down and reflected, just how it all came about. I'd spoiled everything up there on the summit by asking for bad luck to strike Pirot, and by using the pointed language I've referred to so close on top of my prayer when the showshoe went waltzing down the hill.

"This, I think," concluded the American, as he rose, "will illustrate my remark, that while there's nothing prayer won't do, if you're really in earnest and pray hard enough, at the same time it's just as true that if you overload your prayer, or show temper on the top of it, it's just bound to go balky and make trouble for you."

A. Maitland.



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THE OUTLAWS' TREASURE

SUMMARY.

The mail train has been robbed between Cornwall and La Grange stations, and £20,000 worth of gold stolen by a gang of desperadoes, headed by two brothers names Mulligan. Two passengers on the train —Adolph Squirrek, *alias* Smith, a detective tracking the Mulligans, and Fred Weldon, a young lawyer—who had struck up an acquaintance on the way, alight at Somerville, where the former stopped at the "Drover," and the latter at his mother's house. During the night a message comes to say that Judge Woodland's horse has come back alone, and Weldon, together with Squirrek and two other men, set out to find him, and discover one of Mulligan's confederates lying senseless on the road. The man, who had made an unsuccessful attempt on the life of the judge, is sentenced to forty years' imprisonment. At Judge Woodland's Weldon meets a Spaniard named Alvarido Almanaz, and the two men become rivals for the love of Florence, the judge's daughter. Weldon is inveigled to a lonely bridge near Cornwall, and disappears. Squirrek pays a fruitless visit to the spot. Squirrek arouses the citizens of Cornwall, who make their way to the outlaw's hiding-place. One outlaw is found and killed, and the cabin is set fire to. Squirrek discovers a piece of paper with the following cryptogram: "1——0——1. Cfujk't Bsdfj 50zct Mpqug Vmeds sid X gjsf Nbg." He afterwards falls in with the two remaining outlaws, and has them arrested. They are lynched by a furious mob. Both Florence Woodland and her father have dreams of Señor Almanaz in connection with Fred Weldon's disappearance. The Señor leaves Somerville professedly for Cuba. He writes from Chicago to Miss Woodland, asking for a solution to the cryptogram. This is sent, but is intercepted by Squirrek, who has been tracking the Señor, and who at last discovers Fred Weldon, more dead than alive.

CHAPTER XXVII.

(From the Journal of Frederick Weldon.)

What Happened at Devil's Creek.

On the —th of October a telegram reached my office in Brampton, purporting to be sent by my friend, Detective Squirrek, requesting me to meet him that night near the High Bridge, which spans the Devil's Creek, between Cornwall and La Grange.

Without the slightest suspicion of the authenticity of the message, I took the eastward-bound train, just as night was closing in, and shortly after stepped out of the station at Cornwall, and started on foot for the bridge, which was several miles distant.

The night was clear, and a bright moon was in the sky, so that I had no difficulty in making my way along the track.

When about half the distance was passed, I encountered the express, which thundered by with a shock like that of an earthquake. I caught a passing glimpse of several figures standing upon the platforms of the cars as they shot by, and I fancied that one of them shouted to me, but it must have been only a fancy.

Resuming my journey, I walked rapidly along the railway, and shortly after came in sight of the skeleton-like structure known as High Bridge, but saw nothing of any person.

For the first time a suspicion flashed through my mind that I was wandering into a snare, and I slackened my footsteps and walked more carefully, as if afraid of being heard.

My uneasiness was not diminished when I heard footsteps behind me, and looking over my shoulder, saw two men a few yards distant coming towards me.

I felt myself in a predicament. I could not continue walking directly ahead, as it was too dangerous to cross the bridge, while I instinctively shrank from turning either to the right or left, and descending into the dark swampy valley.

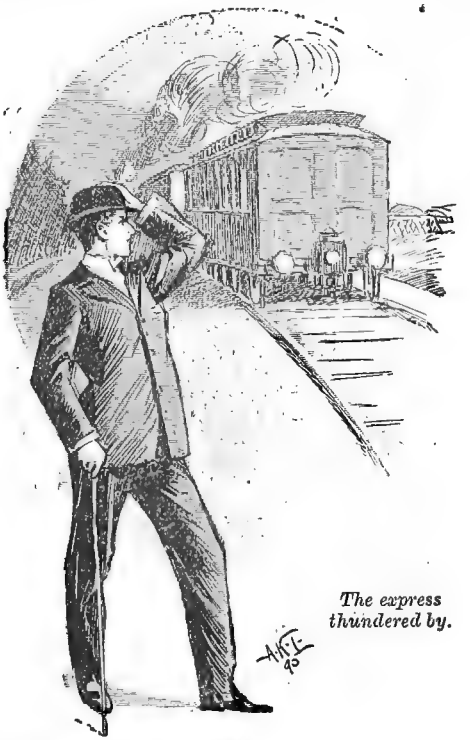
The only thing that remained for me was to turn about and boldly face my pursuers as though I suspected no danger, and I still hoped my fears were unfounded.

I walked slowly forward until I came to the very edge of the structure, when, placing my hand upon the revolver, and holding it ready to whip out at an instant's warning, I turned squarely about, and began my retreat, or more properly my advance.

By this time less than a hundred feet separated the two men from me. They were walking side by side, and I heard one of them say something in a low tone at the moment I turned about.

When we had approached somewhat closer I was not a little astonished to observe that the taller of the two was my acquaintance, Señor Almanaz.

I cannot say that this discovery was a relief. On the



The express thundered by.

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contrary, it was decidedly the reverse, as I felt that if the Cuban hated me as intensely as I did him, he would not hesitate to take every advantage of my situation.

A few seconds later we were face to face. Without either party halting the two men separated, so that I was compelled to walk directly between them.

"Good evening," said the Cuban, lifting his hat with the most ceremonious politeness.

"Good evening," said I in return; "a rather strange place for friends to encounter——"

I remember thus far, and no further. Beyond a doubt

I was struck a blow on the head.

I was struck a blow on the head, which stretched me senseless upon the ground. What followed is mainly conjecture on my part; but as I lie here in bed, with barely enough strength to write, and to think cogently only at intervals, I have run back over the "shadowy past," and putting together all that I can think out for myself, with what I have been able to gather from my attendants and by surmise upon my part, I have come to the following conclusions:

After I had been felled to the ground, my assailants must have picked me up and carried me to the right of the railway track for a considerable distance until they reached a waggon road, where I was placed in a vehicle of some kind and taken a long distance over the road until I reached some house, where I remained, I suppose, for several days, so weak and vague of mind that only the slightest fragment of a recollection remains of my sojourn in that place.

Then comes a dream-like memory of the whirl and rattle of a train, which satisfies me that, as soon as I was able, I was placed in the train and taken to this place, which I judge to be Chicago from a remark or two that has been dropped in my presence.

These lines have been written at one sitting, or rather at one lying, in bed. My first impression was that my home was in a hospital, where I was under medical treatment, but this proved a mistake.

My head is bandaged up, and from the sharp pain that occasionally shoots through it, and the curious, bewildering train of thoughts, I judge that the wound must be a severe one.

Furthermore, the medical treatment I am receiving does not seem to be helping me much; but while I am able to think with some coherence, it is a relief to put my recollections upon paper, and when they fail, give free rein to fanciful conjecture and the imaginative explanation of my curious situation.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Recollections while in Bed.

Thus far I managed to write yesterday when my weakness overcame me, and I dropped back in a sort of swoon.

When I recovered, a medical-looking gentleman was sitting beside the bed, holding my wrist in his hand, and looking earnestly in my face, while a bullet-headed, repulsive man, who was addressed as Muggens stood beside him, engaged in the same occupation.

He asked me no questions, but leaving me some medicine, took his departure, first speaking a few words in a low tone to Muggens.

Before taking his draught, and while in the mood, I will sit up in bed and use my pencil, which Muggens has been kind enough to sharpen for me.

Why am I here?

This is the question which comes up first and foremost, and the solution of which turns my head topsy-turvy.

I can't answer it. What would I not give for the cool-headed, keen-witted Squirrek at this moment! How he would unravel everything, and set me in a whirl of delight at his lightning-like explanations of everything!

Where is Squirrek? Does he know I am here? Why doesn't he come to my assistance? He cannot fail to get traces of me if he sets himself at work to do so.

And my poor mother—has she any intimation of what has befallen her son? If so, I am afraid her heart will break. Is there no way that I can reach her and the rest of my friends? Am I shut out from the world, placed here at the mercy of enemies who can work their pleasure with me without fear? Is this a prison, from which I am never to emerge except by the gate through which, sooner or later, we must all pass?

Such and similar were the questions that presented themselves in bewildering rapidity to me as I attempted clearly to reflect upon my singular situation. While thus occupied I heard footsteps approaching, and when they

A medical looking gentleman was sitting beside the bed.

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were accompanied by a creaking noise I knew at once that my shadow was approaching.

The door was open, and as I turned my head to meet the new comer, he quickly withdrew his face, but not in time to prevent my seeing the sallow complexion and black eyes and moustache of Señor Alvarido Almanaz!

He, then, is my shadow; but he does not always wear creaking boots, else I would have heard him when he approached me on the railway track, and would have identified him when we occasionally met during the day at Brompton.

Almost instantly he turned, and the creaking of the footsteps grew fainter and fainter, until they died out, and I was left alone again with my journal.

Upon examining my wardrobe I found blood upon it, which probably came from my wound. None of my effects were removed; even my revolver was there, although each chamber had been carefully emptied of its charge.

How long I have been here cannot even be guessed; but it is certain that a gross outrage has been perpetrated, and if I am spared the guilty ones shall suffer.

It undoubtedly is the work of the Mulligan brothers, and it is equally certain that this suave Cuban is linked with them. He has managed my abduction, although why he did not slay me outright is more than I can understand. It would have caused him far less trouble, and what vengeance he chose to wreak upon me would then have been completed and secured without his incurring the personal risk which certainly must attend such a proceeding as bringing me so many miles here to Chicago, where my appearance could not have failed to attract attention in the train.

I cannot date my journal, for I have no idea what day of the month, or even of the week, it is. Muggens is impenetrable, and will not answer any question, or bring me a newspaper.

By paying him liberally he gave me some stationery, and took my letter, addressed to my mother, and promised to drop it in the post-office; but I don't believe he had the least intention of doing so.

The doctor, who calls once or twice a day, tells me that I am dangerously ill, and enjoins strict quiet upon me. He forbids me to read or write, but, when awake, it is impossible to avoid thinking, and what harm can there be in giving expression to my thoughts?

I wish I could free myself of the suspicion that the medicine I am taking is doing me more harm than good, but it does seem to me that I am growing steadily weaker, and sinking lower, instead of improving in health.

Perhaps it is well that this suspicion has taken possession of me.

This morning I became enraged, and demanded of the doctor and Muggens to know where I was, by what right they deprived me of the society of my friends, and what their ultimate intentions were regarding myself.

Their only answer was a warning to me to keep quiet, as excitement was highly dangerous. As if a man in my situation could prevent himself from being carried to the highest pitch of exasperation.

Oh, if my revolver were only loaded! What a pleasure it would be to shoot these two villains, together with the prince of criminals, the Cuban, Almanaz, whose creaking steps are frequently heard, but who never comes in, unless it be while I am slumbering! The shadow has resolved itself into a reality which is not impervious to powder and bullet.

I find that I am growing more stupid than usual, and sleeping longer and more frequently than when first brought here. The conviction fastens itself upon me that I am a victim of some species of slow poisoning, which ultimately will carry me away.

Why do not my friends come to my assistance? I have prayed earnestly to Heaven for help, and every footstep startles me into the thought that perhaps it is Squirrek.

And yet he does not come. Has he forgotten me, or does he care nothing for my welfare? Is he so engaged in running down the Mulligan brothers that he thinks I can afford to wait his pleasure?

It must be that he, in common with the others, has given me up for dead. My disappearance is such that there must

As I turned my head to meet the newcomer.

be reason for their believing that to be my fate. So far as I can remember, the Mulligan gang were never in the habit of taking prisoners. When they took a dislike to a man they had a short way of disposing of him. If I cannot understand why I am still living, no one else can, unless it be Squirrek.

My head seemed somewhat clearer to-day, and I made a resolve to submit to this outrageous imprisonment no longer.

After I was left alone I summoned all my strength for the purpose of dressing myself, intending to make my way to the street, and if Mr. Muggens or the doctor attempted to thwart me, I would ascertain precisely how much strength I had left. I could kick up a rumpus at any rate, which might attract attention from the street.

Ah, me! I miscalculated sadly. The moment I stepped upon the floor I fainted and fell, and lay there until picked up and placed back by Muggens, who came in shortly after.

This little occurrence made me realise my helplessness more vividly than ever before. Without the power to walk across the room, with not voice enough to make myself heard further than the next room, what can I do?

Nothing but pray and wait.

Like the old shadow, which ran me to the ground, I cannot tell how long ago, comes the conviction over me that all this medical treatment that I am undergoing is slowly and surely carrying me towards the Dark Valley.

If so, why do they hesitate? There must be some object in it, but what it is passes my comprehension, and this single fact makes me doubt somewhat my own convictions. If Señor Almanaz wished my death, and the doctor is in connivance with him, why all this delay?

Which brings back the question, Why was I ever

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brought to this city? Why was I not left when felled to the earth?

Again and again have my brains been racked over these questions, but with the same futile result. Heaven help me—*I will think no more about it.*

I am much weaker to-day, and my mind is still clouded. Occasional gleams of sharp mental perception, followed by

The moment I stepped upon the floor I fainted and fell.

blank forgetfulness, alternate with each other. I cannot finish a sentence without reading it over several times, so as to keep the connection. A great deal of what I write has no connection at all, and whoever undertakes to decipher this page will have a difficult task.

Well, this can't last much longer. The end isn't far off. O, mother! can't you come to your boy? Come, rock me to sleep, let me lay my bursting head upon your lap, let me sleep—mother—night is closing—take my hand—lead me—O, mother!

Hark! I hear footsteps—can it be mother? No; they sound like those of Squirrek—can it be he? He comes too late.

CHAPTER XXIX.

(From the Journal of Adolph Squirrek.)

THE DETECTIVE LAYS A TRAP FOR ALMANAZ.

It is a good many years since my blood has boiled as it has while reading over this journal of the unfortunate Fred Weldon. Up to this point I have experienced a sort of sympathy for the scamp Almanaz, and have not been particularly anxious to punish him for his rascalities.

But I mistook him; there is no punishment too severe for such a wretch, and there is none which it is in my power to inflict that I shall not visit upon him.

* * * * *

The above was all I was able to write before I proceeded to action. Now that the smoke of battle has cleared away, I can sit down calmly and write its history.

When Fred Weldon handed me his journal, and told me that I would "find it all there," he spoke the truth. One would be blind not to read the heartless revelation contained in those miserably scrawled lines.

Alvarido Almanaz was resolved on leaving the United States, but he was equally resolved before doing so to raise a large amount of money to take with him. He had several intimate confederates, besides a general connection which he maintained with the Mulligan brothers. It is plain that this gang determined on the death of the young lawyer, in consonance with their line of conduct with their enemies, but he had the intention changed to that of abduction.

The Cuban laid the trap which brought Weldon to the High Bridge, where he was stricken to the earth by a fierce blow from a life preserver (as I judged from the appearance of the wound), which came within a hair's breadth of killing him outright.

He was carried down the bank, placed in a waggon, and driven rapidly away to the house of someone, where he was kept several days, until the fever of excitement regarding his disappearance had partly subsided, when he was driven to a distant station, transported to Chicago, and put in charge of Muggens, the keeper of the restaurant.

Here my own blundering stupidity comes to the surface. By suitable inquiry, I could have gained a knowledge of this abduction, and checked it ere it was really consummated. Fred Weldon, I have reason to believe, was taken to Chicago disguised in woman's clothes, and his face carefully concealed from view.

Señor Almanaz entertained grave doubts from the first of his getting any of the immense wealth of the Mulligan brothers, and so he entered into a little scheme of his own. His plan was to take Fred Weldon to Chicago, there keep him securely concealed, under the belief that a large reward would be offered for his recovery, and then to act as a go-between, securing his own immunity from arrest at the same time.

The expected reward was not offered, and he dallied and hesitated, and all this time Fred Weldon was steadily sinking. Doctor Ruthven was a man who engaged in anything, no matter how disreputable, that gave him the requisite cash, and he hesitated not to use his utmost skill to prevent the recovery of his patient. The strong vigorous constitution of the latter would have caused him quickly to rally but for this.

In the meantime the Cuban was becoming desperate. His prisoner must either die or get well, and, if the expected reward failed to reach his hands, he meant that he should do the former. Although pretty well provided with funds at the beginning, his enormous expenses were rapidly running them down, and as poor Weldon remarked, a crisis was close at hand.

At this juncture my humble self appeared upon the scene, and it was high time that I did so.

Having found Fred Weldon alive, and made myself acquainted with his condition, I left, with my mind made up to allow no more delay.

My first proceeding was to telegraph Judge Woodland that Fred Weldon was alive, and would soon be at his home in Somerville, and requesting his daughter to break the tidings as gently as possible to his mother.

And after this I proceeded to business.

My first step was to make myself known at the police headquarters, and to ask for assistance. This was readily obtained, and just at the dusk of evening a close carriage, containing two policemen besides myself, was driven rapidly through the streets in the direction of the restaurant of Mr. Muggens.

We had quite a distance to go, and it was dark when we drew up several streets away. I observed, too, that a fine rain was falling as we stepped out upon the pavement.

We were all dressed in private clothes, and we proposed to enter the restaurant, take a few oysters, and make sure of the presence of either the doctor or Almanaz before we proceeded to anything

As we walked down the steps and pushed open the door we discovered several loungers within, some playing

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dominoes at a small table, with their glasses of beer beside them, while a tall countryman was swallowing bivalves so rapidly that Muggens was in a perspiration from his efforts to keep him going.

We glanced round the apartment, but none of *our* men were there.

CHAPTER XXX.

The Trap Remains Empty.

A half hour passed by, and still there were no indications of the coming of our men. By this time I began to suspect that a trick had been played upon us, and I asked Mr. Muggens to show us to a private room.

He very willingly did so, leading us into a small apartment, and turning up the small point of light into a flaring jet, he stood ready to receive our orders.

"Mr. Muggens," said I, "we wish to have a few words with you."

"All right," was his response, as he looked rather cunningly at me.

"We may as well tell you that we are three police-officers"—here his eyes opened wide, and he put on a scared look—"and we have come to take away that sick man."

"Which one?"

"The one that Señor Almanaz, the Spaniard, brought."

"Why, he isn't here!"

"Where is he?"

"They took him away this afternoon."

"Where did they take him?"

"I don't know, upon my word."

"Who carried him off?"

"Why, the Spaniard and the doctor."

"What is the doctor's name?"

"I—I don't recollect."

"Come, that won't do," said Runkle, one of my men; "we ain't so green as all that. If you can't think of the doctor's name we shall lock you up until you can polish your memory. The fact of it is, Muggens, you are mixed

Pushed open the door and discovered several loungers within.

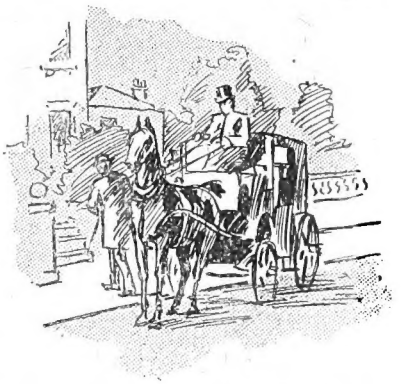
up in rather a bad piece of business, and the best thing you can do is to make a clean breast of everything. It may save you a great deal of trouble."

"Oh, I recollect—Doctor Ruthven!" exclaimed Muggens, his face lighting up, as if with the sudden inspiration.

"I know him very well," said Runkle; "he and I have met before. You are sure, Muggens, that you don't know where he has gone?"

"I would tell you, gentlemen, if I did."

It looked as if the man spoke the truth, and we saw there was nothing more to gain in that direction; but I put a few more questions to him, which I knew he would not dare refuse to answer.



It seemed a long time before we halted.

"How long ago was this sick man brought here?"

"About a couple of weeks, as near as I can remember."

"How was it that they came to bring him here?"

"I have kept Doctor Ruthven's patients once or twice, and there's one of 'em in the house this minute. He brought this young man one night, and said I *must* keep him. He wouldn't take any refusal, and so I was left no choice about it at all; but I never felt easy about it, gentlemen, and I am glad he has been taken off my hands."

"Did the doctor ever tell you his name?"

"No; that's what I didn't like about it."

"I suppose he paid you quite liberally?"

"I wouldn't have the care of another man for double the amount; the fact is, Doctor Ruthven needn't bring any more of his patients here."

The attempt to curry favour on the part of the restaurant-keeper was so transparent that it amused us.

As we rose to depart, Runkle placed his hand upon the man's shoulder, and said, half in jest and half in earnest:

"You'd better take my advice, Muggens, and close up this partnership with Doctor Ruthven. We've had our eye upon you for some time, and one of these days you'll be taking a coach drive before you know it."

A few minutes later the same three individuals who had entered the restaurant something like one hour before came out into the street. We found it raining quite hard, and it was very dark.

Runkle directed the driver, and away we went, rattling through the streets at a speed which struck me as nothing less than dangerous. Fast as we went it seemed a long time before we halted; but when my brother professional pushed open the door, and we followed him out, I recognised the neighbourhood.

It was still raining, and our clothes glistened in the lamplight as we hastily ran across the pavement and up the steps.

The bell was furiously rung, but in answer to our inquiry the servant made answer:

"Doctor Ruthven isn't in."

"Confound the luck!" exclaimed Runkle. "How soon will he be back?"

"Can't tell; perhaps in a few minutes, and perhaps not before morning. Will you come in and wait?"

While we were debating whether to accept the invitation or not, we saw the shadowy figure of a man approaching through the rain, and hoping that he might be the individual we were seeking, we waited until he came opposite.

Sure enough he was our man, and came behind us, rattling a bunch of keys in his hand; but seeing his servant standing at the door, he replaced them in his pocket.

"Good evening," he remarked, looking rather dubiously

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at us as he ran the gauntlet between us to reach the door. "Do you want me?"

"We will explain inside, if you please," said Runkle, shoving open the door, and walking in.

As this proceeding made the doctor the invited party, he followed, and the others brought up the rear.

Inside his office, he reached his hand up to the gas, and as it flamed up, looked sharply into our faces.

"Well, gentlemen, what can I do for you?" he asked, stepping back so as to face us, and coolly taking off his overcoat.

Runkle motioned to me to answer.

"You had better sit down, Doctor, as what I have to say concerns you more than it concerns us. To-day you had a call from a ministerial looking gentleman, who made some inquiries regarding the general health of Chicago. That

The physician went out with them.

man was a detective police officer, who was seeking out young Mr. Weldon—a patient of yours, and a friend of his—and he overheard every word that passed between you and Señor Almanaz, who called shortly after. In short, that gentleman was *myself!* From your office I went straight to Muggens' restaurant, where I found the man lying in a critical condition. The symptoms to me were that he was dying of a slow poisoning, although, not being a medical man, I cannot speak with any certainty. I remained a short time with him, and then went out for company. Early in the evening we returned, but in the meantime you and the Cuban had removed him."

"Yes; I found he was not mending as fast as desirable, and thought it best to change his quarters."

The impudent coolness of this man commanded my admiration. He sat paring his finger nails while I was speaking, and showed not the slightest embarrassment at what I said.

"To cut our story short, we are looking for Mr. Weldon, and have come to ask you to direct us to him."

"I haven't the least objection to doing so," was the reply, uttered with the same refreshing coolness; "but the night is rather stormy ——"

"We have a carriage waiting at the door," interrupted Runkle.

"And I have several engagements," continued the doctor, "one of which is very important."

"Not more so than this," said Runkle. "We cannot excuse you."

"Very well; as you seem greatly interested I will do my my best to serve you. I must speak a moment to my servant," he added, rising hastily and walking to the door.

There was some reason to suspect a trick, and the instant he passed into the hall I stationed myself near the door so as to dart out and intercept him if he made any attempt to leave.

But he halted very near me, and spoke a few rapid words to someone, who made an indistinct reply. Then, as the doctor came back, smiling and polite, we heard the door open and someone pass out.

"Who is that?" I asked, with an uncomfortable suspicion that some game was being played upon us.

"Merely my servant. I have sent him to ask Doctor Barnes to take my place in the consultation that I was to attend this evening."

"Do you propose to wait his return?" I asked.

"It is not necessary. I am ready to accompany you," he replied, drawing on his gloves. "Fortunately we have not a great way to go."

We passed out into the misty rain, where a surprise and disappointment awaited us. The carriage was gone!

An exclamation of fury escaped Runkle.

"That stupid blockhead! he must be afraid the rain will hurt him. Well, we shall have to take it afoot."

Immediately after Doctor Ruthven's servant passed out of the door, I fancied I heard the near roll of carriage wheels, and I then suspected what afterwards proved the truth. The fellow, at the suggestion of the physician himself, made the driver believe that our party had sent him out upon some important errand, and had taken this means of warning the Cuban of his danger.

On this point we had been outwitted, and my two brother professionals held the same suspicions that I did, although neither gave any expression to it.

Doctor Ruthven, as a matter of course, took the lead, and ur nocturnal tramp began.

After leading us through several dark, winding streets, he abruptly halted, and exclaimed:

"By George! I've gone astray."

"Where do you wish to go to?" inquired Runkle.

"No. 19, Blankton Street, I believe is the place."

"If you had told me that when we started out I could have saved all this loss of time," muttered Runkle, who, of course, understood the ruse. "Your actions, Doctor Ruthven, show, beyond all question, that you are engaged in a criminal business. However, I'll take the place of guide, and it isn't likely this mistake will be repeated."

Runkle proved the truth of his words. In less than twenty minutes he halted in front of a restaurant, almost the counterpart of Muggens'.

"Doctor Ruthven seems to have a *penchant* for turning eating-houses into hospitals," he remarked, turning towards that individual. "Please lead the way."

A few minutes after we were in the presence of Fred Weldon, who was stretched upon a small neat cot, apparently asleep.

"I will remain with him," I said to Runkle. "Can you send me a good physician and nurse?"

"I can," was the reply, "and will do so at once; and as soon as you feel it safe to leave your friend, come to headquarters. We shall need your testimony. Doctor, will you be kind enough to accompany us?"

The question was a command, and the physician went out with them without uttering a word, while I remained by the bedside of my young friend, Frederick Weldon.

In the course of an hour, a genial, pleasant faced medical man made his appearance, accompanied by a matronly lady, who it was easy to see, without any questioning, was the nurse that was so badly needed.

(To be continued.)

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THE MISERY OF CORPULENCY.

A copy has come to hand of the just issued 18th edition of Mr. F. Cecil Russell's "Corpulency, and the Cure" (246 pages), the clever little volume which, more than anything else, has brought a revolution in the treatment of obesity. That the still larger circulation implied by the issue of the new edition of this popular work is necessary is proved by such a paragraph as the following. It appears among the answers to correspondents in the "Dress and Fashion" column of a Sunday newspaper with a large circulation: "MISERABLE.—A young girl of 18 ought not to have such a large stomach that no dress looks well. Perhaps you require exercise and dieting." The helpless vagueness of this reply to a young girl who is naturally "miserable" on account of her unseemly obesity is a sufficient evidence that Mr. Russell does well in seeking to make known, even more widely than they are at present, the simplicity, the efficiency, the rapidity, and the delightful surroundings of his treatment for the reduction of superabundant fat. The young girl in question, who might exercise and diet herself for months without any appreciable improvement, may easily learn to imitate the example of thousands of ladies of all ages, who, by the use of Mr. Russell's pure vegetable preparation, have reduced their weight at the rate of pounds per week, and sometimes (but only when necessary, for the working of the cure is virtually automatic, stopping its effects when the normal limit is reached) stones per month. She may acquire this open secret—for the author makes no mystery about the ingredients of his recipe, by sending six penny stamps to Mr. Russell's offices, Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C., when a copy of the book will be sent post free. If she follows his instructions, "Miserable," without any fasting regimen, and without excessive exercise, will find herself being quickly reduced to shapely proportions, with an improved appetite, and full liberty to gratify it.

LONGEVITY AND CORPULENCY.

We have received a copy of the just issued 18th edition of Mr. F. Cecil Russell's "Corpulency, and the Cure" (Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C.). This issue is in itself indicative of the widespread influence which the author now exercises as a successful expert in the treatment of obesity, while the additions to the evidence which, as a statistician, he is in the habit of collecting on the subject are suggestive of some curious reflections. It is evident that Mr. Russell is annually treating thousands of cases of excessive fat with a success which, in the rapidity and the permanence of its manifestation is truly marvellous. That the enormous popularity of his system is likely to increase in the future is most probable, because it is free from all the drawbacks which have rendered the Banting and other methods of reducing corpulence unacceptable to the majority of the sufferers, who have regarded these cures as rather worse than the complaint. By attacking the causes rather than the symptoms of obesity, he strengthens the digestive organs, thus actually increasing, instead of decreasing, the appetite, while the surplus weight is being reduced at a wonderfully rapid rate, amounting to pounds per week, and often stones per month. Add to this that there is no mystery about the nature of the absolutely innoculous preparation, the recipe for which Mr. Russell supplies in his capital little volume (256 pages), which may be obtained post free by sending six penny stamps to the author's offices, at the address given above. It seems certain, therefore, that, as a result of the happy revolution which the patient research of this specialist, with the aid of a distinguished physician as a collaborateur, has effected, the average of longevity will, before long, be appreciably raised. Obesity is, indeed, one of the few antagonistic influences remaining which, especially among the more prosperous classes, prevent the great majority of people of both sexes becoming centenarians. With advanced ideas in regard to wholesome food, clothing, and sanitary arrangements, it only remains to get rid of clogging fat to live an ideally hygienic, and therefore, a very prolonged life.

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